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With the rise of new technologies like generative AI, it has been anticipated that much of the mental work tasks will become more accessible to perform. This would have created space for harnessing soft skills, allowing individuals to pursue their passion and make their time more fulfilling. However, ill effects of technological progress emerge over time. The creation of deep fakes threatens the reputation and dignity of all and sundry, and the risks associated with the spread of AI are growing exponentially, particularly affecting the student community.

The younger generation is getting encultured in a 'hybrid mode' for the first time in human history. This 'hybrid mode' refers to the simultaneous engagement in physical socialization and the digital multiverse, which can create conditions of anxiety. Additionally, there are systemic issues in the examination system, with several instances of compromise coming to light in recent months. In a malfunctioning competitive environment, young minds with thin cushions to seek succor are exposed to a deepening risk condition. In such a risky society, mental health is of paramount importance, and soft skills such as courage, persistence, patience, and endurance are essential to navigate these challenges. Recently, Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, who was released from British prison after plea-bargaining, has rightly pointed out, "Learning that even *intelligent people* can be cowards and that *courage* is a much rarer attribute than intelligence." There are many intelligent people in the world, but very few intelligent people who are courageous. Mere rote learning or desk jobs will not provide the new generation with the soft skills to fulfill their aspirations smoothly in a highly risk-driven world.

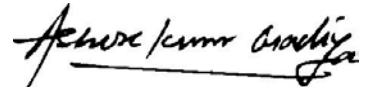
In the current issue of the *Journal of Indian Research*, we are publishing a couple of papers from Bangladesh. There is an in-depth analysis of the interplay between narcotics and insurgency in Myanmar by a senior police officer serving in the state of Assam. Then, we have a very useful paper on applying mindfulness inherited from Buddhism as a management tool in contemporary management and leadership studies by Yashika Sethi. Mindfulness training, indeed, is a way to develop the soft skills that have been described above.

Psychiatrists have made mindfulness practices of Theravada Buddhism as a base for their research work. She writes, "...often it is assumed that nature of the mindfulness, according to Western psychologists, tends to reflect the Buddhist construct. Western scholars and organizational theorists believe that mindfulness removes suffering and enhances wellbeing. In the western psychology literature, the range of mindfulness is influenced by people's ability to describe themselves, accepting experiences, fostering non-judgmental attitudes and awareness towards the present time."

But, in the Sanatana Parampara, mindfulness is quite a different art to understand. Buddhists have promoted mindfulness as a panacea for mental health.

I urge the student community to focus on their mental health in addition to studying and learning new skills. A strong and healthy mind will help maintain personal identity and self-rootedness in an age of artificial intelligence. This 'self-rootedness' refers to maintaining a sense of self and personal identity in a rapidly changing and technologically advanced world. The students must devote half an hour to recourse towards mindfulness activities.

A healthy and courageous generation will have the wherewithal to build India as the Vishwaguru, the mentor of the global community. The sooner we achieve this goal, the better the world will become!



Dr. Ashok Kumar Gadiya
Chairperson, Mewar University

Last one year has seen a major shift in frontier technology. With the rise of generative AI, a new epoch has arrived. Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is a wonderful technology that creates new content, in the form of text, images, or music, based on its training on data and exploring the pattern. Further, generative AI in combination with large language models (LLMs), wherein it is trained on extensive text datasets is at the root of the emergence of revolutionary technology of ChatGPT (General Pretrained Transformers). It was developed by OpenAI, with version 3.5 released in November 2022, then updated to its superior version 4.0 – called GPT-4 – in March 2023. ChatGPT generates human-like text better than most other natural language processing tools. Its coming has prompted a race among major corporations in the IT industry. Many commentators have compared this innovation at par with the printing press. ChatGPT has been performing tasks like writing recipes, beautiful poetry, essays, writing computer code, proof-reading and even it parodies literary styles. It has established itself as highly effective in generating well-formulated text, including academic writing. Its multilingual ability is a boon for democratisation of language skills.

Now, Microsoft has launched Copilot, Google has launched Gemini and OpenAI has its latest version GPT-4o, Grok from Elon Musk’s company xAI, Oracle’s HeatWave GenAI, Anthropic’s Claude 3.5 Sonnet, which are making this revolutionary technology accessible to the general public.

However, these platforms sometimes “hallucinate” non-facts and insist on those falsehoods when queried. Most of them fail basic logic tests. Though, these are good with language skill, when it comes to mathematical operation; much needs to be improved upon.

With integration of many of these platforms with popular applications like whatsapp and technical tools, its impact on educational system will be immense.

In the current issue of the journal, Dr. Kandi Kamala has conducted detailed examination of the impact of AI on education system. She writes how AI in education can assist our teachers in increasing their efficiency by using AI applications such as real-time text to speech and text translation systems, automating mundane and repetitive tasks such as taking attendance, automating grading, personalizing the learning journey based on experience, skill, and understanding, and so on. She highlights the functioning of the PictoBlox AI, India’s first interactive AI education platform, developed to provide a fulfilling project-based learning experience through its artificial intelligence and machine learning tools integrated into a graphical programming interface, to implement AI education in India.

I hope this issue of the journal receives wider attention. I also take this opportunity to invite original research papers from the scholars world across so that its periodicity gets regularized.

– **Niraj Kumar**
Honorary Editor-in-chief

IDENTITY, RELIGION AND GLOBAL JIHAD: FACTFILE OF CHINA AND MYANMAR

Satyaraj Hazarika*

ABSTRACT

The essay describes evolution of Islamic radicalism in China and Myanmar during modern times. The paper further argues how the Rohingya crisis in Rakhine area of Myanmar and concomitant exodus of refugees has spurred pan-Islamic movement in neighbouring countries like Bangladesh. The essay provides insight into source of funding of the engaged groups and can be a useful guide for policy makers in the region to stall the rising danger of global jihad in cockpit of Asia.

Keywords: al-Qaeda, Bamar, Hui, jihad, Rakhine, Rohingya, Shan, Sittwe, Yunnan.

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, huge anti-Muslim riots swept across Myanmar cities and towns. The primary targets were the Rohingya, when, in Rakhine, four men of their community allegedly raped a Buddhist woman. Crowd razed houses of Muslims who were not Rohingya and even Chinese Muslims called Panthays or Hui were not spared. The Panthays are descendants of Ghengis Khan, whose grandson Kublai Khan ruled China from 1260-1294 AD by establishing the Yuan dynasty. Kublai descended on Yunnan in 1253 AD and subjugated the Dali Kingdom by his conquest. The history of Panthays or Hui Muslims of Yunnan begins with Kublai's conquest of the region.

The Panthays settled in Northern Myanmar in Shan, Kachin and Sagaing province after the Panthay rebellion (1856-1873 AD) which was crushed by Qing Emperor in China, making the community flee across Chinese borders. Many of them got involved in the Opium trade of the Golden Triangle but the rebellion shifted the drug trade from China to further south inside Myanmar.

China in their own country has been battling Muslim separatists in Xinjiang province from late 1960s. Anti-Muslim riots in Myanmar fended off any threat from its southern axis, which might have emerged as hotbed for Islamic fundamentalists in southwest China. The majority Bamars or ethnic Myanmarese are frustrated with the increasingly virulent rhetoric of Ashin Wirathu and Ma Ba Tha of the powerful Buddhist clergy of the Theravada sect.

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In China, only 9% of its population are of ethnic Muslim origin. Muslims in Myanmar today constitute 2.3 percent (2014 census) of its population and half of it are in Rakhine province alone. Just like China is wary of Muslims revolt (the Panthay) and later the Xinjiang rebellion, hardline opinion in Myanmar and China are not dissimilar. The Muslims are considered a threat by junta chiefs of Myanmar. To appease the clergy, they adopt similar positions as far as immigrants are concerned.

UYGHUR'S OF XINJIANG IN CHINA: BEGINNING OF JIHAD

Xinjiang, which was annexed into China in the mid-18th Century, was populated by Turkic speaking Uighur or Uyghurs. From 1949, the re-emergence of a new and centralized power enabled China to assert sovereignty over the region. The communist regime then introduced a policy for minorities modeled on the Soviet pattern. Fifty-five national minorities together with the Han make up the Chinese nation. After Turkish-speaking Uyghurs province of Xinjiang was made an autonomous region in 1955 AD, there began settlement of Han Chinese in Xinjiang. This internal colonization sowed seeds of the future revolt.

The Uyghur identity crisis of 1960s erupted once disproportionate increase of Han settlement was perceived. They began to express themselves with the formation of East Turkistan People's Party (ETPP) in the year 1968, and it went underground.

In 1980s, student unrest began in Xinjiang as Afghan war unfolded across the Durand line and fighters from the Islamic world joined the war alongside Afghan Mujahideen to battle Soviet troops in Afghanistan. In 1989, Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protest and its fall-out led the Chinese security apparatus to stifle dissent of any form across China. In the Baren (near Kashgar) insurrection of April, 1990 led by Zeydin Yusup of Turkistan Islamic Party, first acts of sabotage happened in Xinjiang. In February 1992, on the eve of the Chinese New Year, three persons were killed in a bus at Urumqi by Shock Brigade of Islamic Reformist Parties. On 25th February, 1997 four bomb blasts killed 9 and injured 74 in Urumqi, suspected to be carried out by East Turkistan National Alliance.

In another major attack on March 7th, 1997, the bomb went off in a bus in Peking's Xidan district leaving 30 persons injured and two dead. Responsibility for this attack, the first to affect Peking since 1949, was claimed by Islamist of East Turkistan Freedom Party based in Turkey. There were reports in Chinese media that Uyghurs in Kazakhstan joined Islamic Renaissance Party in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and Islamic movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) or Hizb-ut- Tahrir (HT). There were also reports that 10,000 Uzbeks went to Pakistan for religious training with Jamaat-e- Islami and Tablighi-Jamaat. In 1996, China implemented its *Strike Hard (da fa)* campaign including in Xinjiang. In wake of 9/11, China accelerated the *Strike Hard* in Xinjiang.

By early November 2001, police closed 13 illegal religious schools and arrested more than fifty persons to control religious extremism in Xinjiang. In 2008, the anti-communist Uyghur separatism forces called Turkistan Islamic Party threatened Beijing Olympics Games.

East Turkestan Information Centre (ETIC) based in Germany led by Abudujelili Kalakash, the World Uyghur Youth Congress (WUYC), ETHO (East Turkestan Liberation

Organization) and ETIM (East Turkestan Islamic Movement) are listed as terror groups by the Chinese security forces. ETIM emerged as a front-line Islamist group in Xinjiang and they established contact with Osama Bin Laden of Al-Qaeda. Chinese media released figures of 200 Uyghurs in Bin Laden Camps who participated in the Afghan Jihad, fighting alongside Hizb-e-Islami, Taliban and IMU. Salafi-Jihadist organization Lashkar-e-Taiba enrolled Uzbeks for Jihad in Jammu & Kashmir as did Hizbul Mujahideen. On 1st March 2014, 29 people were killed and 130 injured in Kunming railway station in a knife attack by Uyghur Jihadis that marked the coming of Jihad to the Chinese heartland.

JIHAD AND MYANMAR

Ne Win who seized power on 2 March 1962, followed a hardline policy against the Rohingya. On the eve of Burma's independence on 4 Jan 1948, Ne Win as Deputy Chief of Army battled the Mujahideen forces of Rohingya who wanted to join Pakistan. But the rebellion was put down and most of the leaders were arrested.

In 1978, Ne Win, a veteran of Rohingya insurgency launched Ops Naga Min (Dragon King) in Arakan. This operation started a long saga of migration from Arakan to Chittagong's Cox Bazar. As a consequence of these operations, clashes began between ethnic Buddhist or Rakhine people and Rohingya at the local level. The Cold War of late 1970s was all set to change the Rohingya issue as thousands of Bangladeshis joined the Afghan jihad launched across the Durand line in Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

By this time, Cox Bazar hosted a good 1-1.5 lakh Rohingya as the first Islamist group RSO (Rohingya Solidarity Organization). ARNO (Arakan Rohingya National Organization) made their appearance in Cox Bazar with a sprinkling of the fundamentalism spread among the Muslim community in Upper Burma in 1980s and 1990s.

The 1990s saw a much more concerted effort by the jihadi elements to take up the Rohingya issue as a fight against Myanmar's discrimination towards Rohingya. Burma meanwhile passed the Citizenship Bill in 1982 that does not recognize the Rohingya as one of the 135 ethnic groups of the country, denying them citizenship rights, and rendering them stateless.

Parallel to the growth of Rohingya resistance in Arakan (now Rakhine), the Rakhine Buddhists showed secessionist tendency from late 1960s inspired by similar insurgencies by other ethnic communities like Karens, Kachins, Chins bordering Arakan and Shans. The ALA (Arakan Liberation Army) is fighting the junta for an ethnic Rakhine autonomy. The Naga Min operations targeted the ALA and the pro-government militias that came up in Arakan took on the Rohingya, as Ne Win's policies turned sharply against them.

Al-Qaeda the harbinger of Islamic jihad was born in 1988 under its leader, the Saudi citizen Osama Bin Laden (OBL) who rallied jihadi forces to victory in Afghanistan with the Mujahideen rebels. The Bangladeshi component of the Afghan jihad returned home to form HUJI-B i.e. Harkat-ul-Mujahideen-Bangladesh) in 1989 and took up the Rohingya issue. They only disclosed their formation in Dhaka in 1992, as the jihadist took out Afghan victory celebration in the streets.

By early 1990s, the first of the cadres of Harkat ul jihad ul Arakan under Abdul Quddus could send a forty-member team to train in Afghanistan and Libya. With this the global jihadi outfit al Qaeda tested the next jihadi venture after Afghanistan.

The policy of Ne Win vis à vis Rohingya are followed by his successors who ruled Myanmar from 1988 after he abdicated the post consequent to pro-democracy movement in Myanmar. The quasi-military nature of Than Shwe and Thein Sein's premiership in Myanmar implemented Tatmadaws (Myanmar military) strategy of *kill all, burn all, destroy all*, following the Japanese Army doctrine in Burma during World War II. This strategy was continued until 2012. The Cox Bazar Rohingya refugee camps became breeding ground of extremism fed by pan-Islamic jihad by preachers like Al Qaeda's Anwar al Awlaki (killed in US drone attack in 2011) and his follower Md Jasimuddin Rahmani of Bangladesh.

A shadow group of Harkah ul Yakin was formed by Karachi-born Ataullah who immediately went underground in 2011. Just in the aftermath of anti-Muslim riots, this group surfaced as self-styled ARSA (Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army). Between 2012-2017, Ataullah and his group could launch operations against Tatmadaw, culminating in August 2017 attack that left over fifty security forces of Myanmar dead. The emergence of ARSA gave renewed push for a joint force called Tatmadaw operations that saw over 600,000 Rohingya fleeing to Cox Bazar after the Aug 2017 ARSA attack.

From 2009 in the Hpakant jade mines of Kachin, a group of Buddhist Rakhine workers were recruited and trained by KIA (Kachin Independence Army) at Myanmar-Chinese border. The group called Arakan Army (AA) began as junior partner of Northern Alliance comprising of ethnic armies of Shans, Was, Palaungs and Kachins that took up arms against Tatmadaw. As a new force, AA insurgents fought Tatmadaw in Shan state in joint operations, earning praise from Alliance members. By 2014, taking a North South Corridor from Sagaing to Yesago (near Irrawaddy) to Kalay and another 130 kms beyond, the AA cadres marched to the rising massif of Chin hills. They established their base in Paletwa in Chin hills, across the Kaladan river in 2014. The Kaladan rises in the Chin hills, passing through Mizoram and drains into Sittwe port of Rakhine. Sittwe is also the capital city of Rakhine. From 2015, AA could infiltrate south into Arakan and forge links with Rakhine heartland in Buddhist townships of Kyawktaw, Mrauk-U, Min Bya and Ponnagyun close to Sittwe. AA also infiltrated into Rohingya townships of Buthidaung and Rathedaung. In 2016 it overran bases of ALA (armed wing of Arakan Liberation Party) in Paletwa. AA's standing with FPNCC (Federal Political Negotiating Committee) which declined NCA (National Ceasefire Agreement) in 2015 helped it to fill up the political vacuum that arose with Islamist upsurge within Rakhine.

Groups like UWSA (United Wa State Army) of 30,000 cadres, KIA (Kachin Independence Army) with 10,000 cadres and AA with 8000-9000 combatants is now considered as top three insurgent armies of FPNCC.

The Rohingya crisis which triggered an exodus of a million plus refugees got a renewed interest in pan-Islamic Islamist groups as ISIS made its appearance in 2014. This Salafist

group of ultraorthodox Islam made rapid inroads in Bangladesh and with the expatriate Bangladeshis eager to join it. Two such nodes are Canadian Bangladeshi Tamim Ahmed Choudhary and 'Ex Cadet Islamic Learning Forum' of Japanese Bangladeshi Saifullah Ozaki. On 1st July 2016, Tamim Ahmed Choudhary's Neo-JMB which pledged allegiance to ISIS carried out a gruesome attack on holy artisan bakery at Gulshan Dhaka killing 20 people, mostly foreigners including an Indian student.

The emergence of global Jihad Organization in Xinjiang and Rakhine province of China and Myanmar respectively from 1990s after the Afghan wars is quite unsettling for the geo-political balance in Asia as terrorist groups by overt use of violence try to influence the national policy of target nations.

MINDFULNESS IN LEADERSHIP: TRADITIONAL TEACHINGS AND CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Yashika Sethi*

ABSTRACT

This paper broadly aims to critically analyze the application of mindfulness inherited from Buddhism, as a management tool in contemporary management and leadership studies. This paper will discuss early Buddhist teachings regarding Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya. Specifically, it tries to investigate the concept of mindfulness in its relation to present-centeredness and non-judgmental nature. The methodology employed here is conceptual analysis. The argument in this paper is threefold – Firstly, the paper argues that mindfulness cannot be just present-centered as in Buddhist conception it also means remembering. Secondly, it argues that mindfulness cannot be attributed as non-judgmental as it cannot be free from cognitive mental states. Thirdly, it argues that mindfulness cannot be a non- evaluative as the difference between kuśala and akuśala karmas cannot be ignored.

The paper comprises three parts Part one introduces the concept of mindfulness and mindful leadership. Part two dwells on the literature in psychology vis-à-vis the application of mindfulness as a management tool. The present work will deal with psychologists and organizational theorists who ground their work in Buddhism, especially early Buddhism. Part three elaborates upon how a transfer of bhāva can take place and whether the contours of developmental psychology are sufficient to explain this phenomenal sharing of experience.

Keywords: mindfulness, sati, mindful leadership, bare attention.

INTRODUCTION

Buddhism has bestowed upon humanity the practice of mindfulness. Various philosophers, therapists and psychiatrists have also taken a keen interest in the concept of mindfulness. Mindfulness is often translated as “bare attention”. But in Buddhist philosophy it has broader meaning and usage. The meaning of this term has been part of great debate and discussion. On the one hand, organizational scholars like Dane, Fiol & Connor, Levinthal & Rerup, building

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upon western and psychological studies argue that mindfulness is present-centered awareness; and on the other hand, scholars like Robert Sharf, Bryan Levman and Georges Dreyfus argues that mindfulness incorporates the memory in its meaning so it cannot be just *bare attention* to present awareness.

This paper is divided into four sections. The first section deals with the examination of widely adopted definition of mindfulness by S. Bishop and the construct of mindfulness by Jon Kabat-Zinn. In the second section, the paper discusses early Buddhist concept of mindfulness as a comparative basis for examining how contemporary definitions of mindfulness in the organizational and psychological literature differ significantly. This section tries to establish contact between the concept of *sati* and the concept of mindfulness from *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. In the third section, the role of the development in the field of mindfulness in organizational theories in relation to leadership ethics has been elucidated. In the fourth section, the Buddhist model of mindful leadership and its contemporary relevance has been succinctly put forth.

I

Psychiatrists have made mindfulness practices of Theravada Buddhism as a base for their research work. The understanding of the concept of *mindfulness*, has been brilliantly developed by Georges Davis in his paper, “*Is Mindfulness Present-Centered and Non-Judgmental?*”. These two axes are the main concern of mindfulness practices around the globe.

S. Bishop has given a widely accepted definition of *mindfulness*. He identifies *mindfulness* practice with three criteria, viz. non-elaborative, non-judgmental and present-centered.

Mindfulness forms the central tenet to mindfulness-based interventions. There exist differences over the definition of mindfulness among western scholars and Buddhist scholars. Often it is assumed that nature of the mindfulness according to Western psychologists tend to reflect the Buddhist construct. Western scholars and organizational theorists believe that mindfulness removes suffering and enhances wellbeing. In western psychology literature, the range of mindfulness is influenced by people’s ability to describe themselves, accepting experiences, fostering non-judgmental attitudes and awareness towards the present time. The work of Jon Kabat Zinn in behavioral approaches, work of S Bishop and theorists have described mindfulness as non-elaborative and non-judgmental, present-centered awareness. With the temporal flow of time, every activity or action is acknowledged and accepted. There is no scope of accepting past actions or any conceptualization of past activities. This is different with the concept discussed in various Buddhist texts. One may agree that the reason behind the old idea ought to be reinterpreted and re-established in the light of modern times on modern lines. During Buddha’s time, primary teaching in Buddhism were only two-fold: *Arya Satya* (Noble Truth) and the *Pratītyasamutpāda* (Dependent co-origination). While applying these two teachings of Buddha to the concept of mindfulness, utmost care and concern should be considered so that the main lessons of Buddha’s teaching do not get diluted.

Elaborating the two characteristics of mindfulness which differentiates Western approach with Eastern (Buddhist) method are as follow:

- Non-judgmental nature of mindfulness is our state of awareness which allows observation

of mental states without overidentifying with them to create attitude of acceptance resulting in creation of better understanding. This may also provide a way to disengage from habitual pattern of behavioral responses of individual to difficult instances than to remain a prisoner of one's own habit and compulsion. Their primary concern is habit-forming when they describe mindfulness as non-judgmental.

- The description of present-centered non-evaluative awareness describes a state of mind where an individual focuses on events happening in the present moment. There is no scope of evaluating experiences attached with past and future moments. In a way, the individual mind is merely interested in things occurring in the present moment along with observations of reactions.

Among Buddhist scholars and Western scientists, both independently and together, there is a lack of agreement about the specific definition of mindfulness.

In contrast with Western description of mindfulness, Buddhist definition encompasses practices which settles with past experiences as well as future practices. The work discussed in *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* lays the discourse for mindfulness meditative practices to make individual mind to function in different circumstances. Meditative practices ensure elimination of causes of sorrow and sufferings, progress towards spiritual development and substantial changes in emotional traits and cognitive control over the mind. This results in balanced behavioural practices.

II.

Mindfulness is the ability of the mind to retain and bind information on the object without losing the flow of experience. Mindfulness or *Sati* (Sanskrit: *smṛti*, स्मृति) has been used to describe awareness, attention and remembering. One being mindful is equivalent to being in the state of present. These terms are widely exchanged while discussing the nature and scope of *Sati*. Buddhaghosa gives the definition of *sati* within the context of the classical Theravāda tradition, “they remember (*saranti*), or it itself remembers, or it is simply just remembering (*sarana*). Thus, it is mindfulness (*sati*). Its characteristic is not wobbling; its function is not to forget. It is manifested as guarding or the state of being face to face with an object.” (Ñānamoli Bhikkhu 1976, XIV 141).¹ The notion of *sati* can be analyzed in contrast to mindfulness being present-centered and non-evaluative awareness in contemporary discourses. *Sati*/mindfulness should be evaluative, cognitive and judgmental in acceptance of activities. It shall describe the ability to retain information. The non-conceptuality of mind being defined as present-centered should not be the defining force of mindfulness. Rather the ability of mind in retaining information and explicitly evaluative, without drifting away from present, the wholesome (*kuśala*) and unwholesome (*akuśala*) mental states should be taken. It is the retentive ability, memory and mindfulness which has significant similar characteristics that tends to construct “process of mindfulness” in sustainable way. For example, while viewing objects one tends to integrate flow of information thus making sense of it and not carried away by the flow of information.

In true sense, *sati* is meaningful and makes sense only when it includes recollection of past as well as present positions. This ability of the mind to retain attention without losing the temporal flow and circumstances has been explained by Buddhaghosa. Retention improves

with top-down ability of mind. The practice of meditation tends to increase the capacity for top-down process to hold information and allows mind to strengthen cognitive control. Such mechanisms tend to integrate information into meaningful patterns and create understanding of intersubjectivity, tolerance and tranquility.

The Buddhist concept of mindfulness and parts of Western organizational theorists followed by psychological literature needs to be constructed in a way which leads to better understanding of the concept of mind and its attributes. The discourse over mindfulness has remained matter of debate for contextualization, embeddedness and psychological development in contrast with Buddhist practices. The Western science does not accept the original form of mindfulness proposed in the Buddhist literature. According to them it fails to bring out fundamental changes in the psychological development of an individual. As an outcome, de-contextualized form of mindfulness is accepted.

Theravada Buddhist literature identifies three forms of mindfulness: *sati*, *appamāda* (ethical code of conduct, Sanskrit: *apramāda*) and *sampajañña* (right spiritual development). Mindfulness as *appamāda* is not much different with *sati*. In fact, it further augments the definition of *sati*. *Appamāda* brings with it sets of ethical conduct within the sphere of activities. This introduces ethical dimension to mindfulness and moves beyond awareness of happening (*sati*).

Western perspective

Ethics is codification of morals designed for recognized work. In the West, the notion of right and wrong involves moral values and ethics. This has created differences as right for one can be wrong for others. There is a struggle for an individual to work out how their action is right and preserves the interests of the others. This does not mean that people are allowed to act immorally. To measure the conventional form of ethical conduct- general rights and universal rights are suggested. In this way the individual can keep generating awareness about one's own actions, keeping his mind updated with sets of event/information happening. Thus, the Western scholars have myopic approach in neglecting ethical code as important force. It's the awareness of ethical consideration that helps the individual to generate mindful activities.

Eastern Perspective

There are several teachings available to describe morals and their code of conduct. Buddha's Eight-fold path (*Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*), ethical framework in *Pañca-sīla* (five precepts) and other characteristics like kindness, compassion are available to codify morals. It is seen that ethical conduct and mindfulness involves self-awareness of own action within moral framework. If *sati* involves merely non-judgmental awareness (i.e. including both past and present experiences), ethics introduces components of judgment in the form of compassion and kindness because an individual is aware about the moral conduct and the worth it creates.

In contrast to the Western approach, ethics in Buddhist literature reflects that ethics not only creates well-being for self but also creates positive mental state. The ethics create awareness about *kamma niyāma* where there is no involvement of super-agency but own self actions. Theravada Buddhist explains that awareness of actions and essence of moral

framework delivers benefits to self and to the others. The dimension added by ethical conduct (*appamāda*) to mindfulness is more than just experiencing actions as happenings (*sati*). The individual firstly judges the series of information and then reflects on actions based on precepts of compassion or kindness. Such intervention of ethics in mindfulness is missing in western discourse.

III.

The main issues addressed in this section are the misconceptions regarding the concept of mindfulness for individual/leader in management literature being-

- a) Consideration of mindfulness as of psychological nature which does not require any sustained meditative training/practice.
- b) Mindfulness in the very first place is just a *bare attention*.
- c) Considering mindfulness to be synonymous with the non-judgmental nature of present moment awareness, which is most of the time related with stress reduction.

Let us examine how these misconceptions have made management and organizational theorists to unknowingly take up the idea of mindfulness as being an ethically neutral conception and performance enhancement technique.

Organizational scholars like Dane (2011), Hede (2010), Hunter & McCormick (2008), Weick & Putnam (2006), have relied on a very selective and puzzling mixture of Buddhist sources, coupled with western ideas taken up from the work of Langer and other clinical psychologists [Brown & Ryan (2003), Langer & Moldoveanu(2000)]. These works are of the same ideology as described by Kabat-Zinn in following ways, “*Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non -judgmentally*”.

Although Kabat-Zinn’s model of mindfulness is well established in the scientific literature, clinicians and neuroscientists have recently started looking into the idea of mindfulness as described in the 2500-year-old historical models having its origin in the Buddhist tradition.

The most prominent characteristics of mindfulness propagated by the modern world are far distant from Canon’s ideology of mindfulness. But mindfulness is a function of past memory, therefore, it cannot be attributed as *bare present- moment attention*. The views of mindfulness in contemporary times are coming to be seen as partial understandings which have understated or have completely left out the role which ethics play. As Dreyfus (2011) so eloquently pointed out, “. . . *contemporary authors are in danger of leading to a one-sided understanding of mindfulness as a form of therapeutically helpful spacious quietness*”.

MINDFULNESS IS NOT REDUCIBLE TO A PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAIT

Dane (2011) argues that the empirical work done by western scholars is giving a convergent and collective understanding of the concept of mindfulness. This is contradicted in recent literature of clinical and contemplative neuroscience, to large differences and disparities in the way mindfulness is conceptualized, operationalized, and practiced [Chiesa(2012), Chiesa & Malinowski(2011), Dorjee(2010), Grossman(2008,2011); Malinowski (2008), S. Stanley(2013)]. Dane’s assertion strike as being premature and unfounded. This assertion is liable

for rejection as the empirical data which Dane is following is derived from psychological questionnaires which purpose to measure mindfulness. [Baer(2011),Baer, Samuel, & Lykins(2011), Baer, Smith, & Allen(2004) Brown & Ryan(2003), Lau *et al.*(2006), Walach, Buchheld, Buittenmuller, Kleinknecht & Schmidt(2006)]. Till now a minimum of nine different psychometric questionnaires have been studied all of which aim to measure and define mindfulness in a different way (S. Stanley,2013). Additionally, several issues related to construct validity, reliability and self-reporting biases linked with several mindfulness questionnaires, and an implicit assumption that discrete psychological features can be quantified and measured tantamount to mindfulness have been observed (Grossman & Van Dam (2011)). Giving a critical evaluation of empirical approach, Grossman & Van Dam (2011) summarizes:

“A benchmark doesn’t exist which can be used to evaluate questionnaires intending to measure mindfulness. Therefore, we cannot claim to know if a questionnaire is reliable in measuring some aspects of mindfulness. This scenario raises another concern for the explanation which might lose the relationship to the teachings and practices that gave rise to MBCT & MBSR”.

Contrasting to the Dane’s work, a high level of divergence in how mindfulness is, practiced, defined and conceptualized among different questionnaires has been found by Grossman (2008). Western psychological version of mindfulness is thought to be a single and multidimensional attribute in addition to a state-like quality [Chiesa(2012),Lau *et al.*(2006)]. For example, Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) of Brown and Ryan’s (2003) is one of the most widely acceptable scale to measure mindfulness. It is based on the idea that concept of mindfulness is a construct based on “present-centered attention” [Chiesa(2012)]. The main theme behind the MAAS is the idea that mindfulness can be evaluated on the bases of how an individual thinks, –which Dane terms as “mind-wandering”[Dane (2011),Grossman &Van Dam(2011)]. In opposition to this, the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) views Mindfulness as a multifaceted trait. FFMQ is made up of subscales as “describing” which measures how much an individual can convey themselves in words, mitigation of emotions, and self-criticism [Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer and Toney(2006)].

Self-report mindfulness evaluation has a tendency of observable simplistic language, which fails to capture the multidimensional processes of mindfulness. Also it may be comprehended in different ways by different groups of people [Grossman and Van Dam(2011)]. This has led to several questionable observations between non-meditators and experienced meditators. In Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory’s (FMI) evaluation, the score of binge-drinkers was significantly higher on mindfulness as compared to the score of experienced meditators (whereas college students were in the middle). Moreover, no assumption of prior requirement of mindfulness training was taken into consideration as such self-reports are made based on an ordinary state of awareness suspending any requirement of being in an attentive state [Grossman (2011)].

It was accepted by Kabat-Zinn (2013) that mindfulness cannot be gauged by survey-based instruments. A number of scholars has also rejected the current questionnaire of measuring mindfulness as these seem to be distorting and misinterpreting the classical conceptualization of mindfulness as practiced by Buddhists [Chiesa (2012), Grossman(2008),Rapgay &

Bystrisky(2009)]. Critiquing the current trends of research in psychology of mindfulness Grossman and Van Dam (2011) have made a very assertive point which should be taken into consideration.

Thus, the question arises how to measure mindfulness without playing down the original Buddhist practice? Grossman and Van Dam (2011) provides several possibilities of measuring the mindfulness of an individual using in-depth interviews, centering around the measures and particularity of consequence of the practice of mindfulness and the examination and measurement of the psychological and physiological changes that are experienced by an individual after practicing mindfulness. Additionally, initiatives such as Mind & Life Institute's "Mapping the Mind" project and "The Contemplative Development Mapping Project" at Brown University which are relatively new are attempting to a more comprehensive method to measure the practice of mindfulness. These also critically involve Buddhist textual tradition and experienced Buddhist meditators [Britton, Lindahl, Cahn, Davis and Goldman (2014), Mind and Life Institute (2013)]. These initiatives also take cross-cultural collaboration into consideration. They employ neuroscientists, clinicians and contemplative scholars to develop a new research methodology that will consider first and the third persons approach, to understand the Buddhist practice of mindfulness in a detailed and a complex manner.

IV.

This section deals with the contemporary relevance of mindful leader model from an early Buddhist perspective. First is to make decisions effectively. It is certain that managerial or leadership decisions will be better if these are taken in the state of mindfulness. Teamwork which can also be said as relationship management will be the second area of concern. This will help in better transmission of the vision, motivation and the quality to inspire. This stems from the fact that mindfulness instils emotional stability in a person which in turn leads to effectively finding solutions to disputes at the workplace. Work-life balance is the third area of concern. A person practicing mindfulness is calm and peaceful. These qualities help the person to effectively tackle stress generated during personal life and work. Ecocentric relationships are the fourth area of concern. The interconnectedness between man and nature is better recognized with the help of mindfulness. Hence, it can be stated that a mindful leader brings eccentric fresh organizational ideas which result in sustainable lifestyle.

CONCLUSION

The above diagrammatic representation shows that central concern for Buddhist conception of mindfulness and at other level, organizational and psychological work, differs considerably. It is crucially

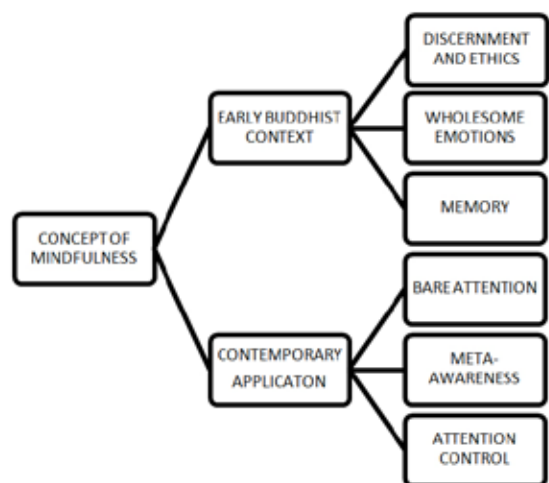


Figure: Concept of Mindfulness

important to understand that the capacity of mindfulness should not be limited to just as a therapeutic technique, but it should be extended to the natural dimension which is an important part of cognitive process. This dimension of mindfulness is not looked upon when it is viewed only from a one-sided aspect of being a non-judgmental present-centered awareness of experience.

We also perceive that equating mindfulness with present-centered non-judgmental awareness understate the cognitive consequences of mindfulness, its capabilities of bonding together the vast array of experiences which may enable one to understand and grasp the very essence of physical and psychological state of body. Relying heavily on the non-judgmental character of mindfulness and placing the main problem in conceptuality, contemporary philosophers are giving a wrong direction to the idea of mindfulness and reducing it to a partially derived view of being only a therapeutically beneficial spacious quietness. It is crucially important to understand that the capacity of mindfulness should not be limited to just as a therapeutic technique, but it should be extended to the natural dimension which is an important part of cognitive process. This dimension of mindfulness is not looked upon when it is viewed only from a one-sided aspect of being a non-judgmental present-centered awareness of experience.

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ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS IN BANGLADESH: POST-COVID SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ON HOST COMMUNITY

Taslima Aktar*

ABSTRACT

The Rohingya are an ethnic minority based in Myanmar. Since the independence of Myanmar in 1948, Rohingya's claim of separate ethnic identity has been recognized by the government of Premier Thakshin U Nu. Rohingyas were stateless without a legitimate nationality in 1962 when the military ruler General Ne Win denied them citizenship. Numerous of them were forced to resettle in Bangladesh and other neighboring countries and they sought asylum. In 1978, when Myanmar's military junta propelled Operation Nagamin, thousands of Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh. A huge number of Rohingyas started to reach Bangladesh in 1991, 1992, and 2012. Around 87000 Rohingya escaped to Bangladesh from October 2016 to July 2017, after military reprisal. Presently, around a million Rohingyas are living in Bangladesh. Prolonged negotiation has failed to resolve the Rohingya refugee crisis. Besides that, during the post-Covid period, inflation affected Bangladesh's economy, security, and socio-political stability. The present paper attempts to analyze the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh and its socio-economic impact on the host community during the post-Covid period. The presence of a large number of Rohingya people is putting pressure on the local environment, economic, social, cultural, health, and security aspects of Bangladesh.

Keywords: Bangladesh-Myanmar, host community, post-Covid, Rohingya, socio-economic impact.

INTRODUCTION

Myanmar was once Burma¹, a country in Southeast Asia. It connects South and Southeast Asia. It shares borders with Bangladesh, India, China, Laos, and Thailand. Its geographical location and natural resources have given it a noteworthy position in South and Southeast Asia. Myanmar gained independence from British colonial rule on the 4th January 1948. It is a

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country of 135 ethnic groups. The composition of different ethnic groups falls under the eight major groups: Arakan/Rakhine, Barman/Burmans, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni/Kayah, Mon, and Shan (Smith, 1999: 29-30). Of these groups, Burmese/Barmans constitute 70% of the total population (*The Daily Kaler Khantho*, 2018). The country's ethnic composition is one of the most complex composites in the world, with over 100 languages and dialects. Among the total population of Myanmar, approximately 4% are Muslims and among these Muslims, only one million are Rohingya Muslims (International Religious Freedom Report, 2022). The Rohingya Muslims are a combination of varied racial groups; encompassing the Arabs, Moghuls, and Bengalis (Alam, 2013: 3-5).

A great debate exists about the ancestries of the Rohingya community of the Arakan/Rakhine region. Among these, two contradictory views are the most influential. The first one considers Rohingyas as illegitimate immigrants from Bengal/Bangladesh (Saw, 2011). The second view recognizes Rohingyas as natives of the Arakan state including offspring of the original Muslims converted on Ramree atoll (Forster, 2011: 63-70). Although these two opposing views deal with the root of the Rohingya community, in reality, a great number of Muslims have existed in the Arakan state for hundreds of years (Azad, and Jasmine, 2013: 25-35). Their history can be traced back to the early seventh century when Arab Muslim traders settled in the area. Therefore, it is also recognized that they are physically, linguistically, and culturally similar to South Asians, especially Bengali people, and have linguistic similarities with the people of Chittagong.²

Historically, the Rohingyas have fled to Bangladesh to escape acute suppression in Myanmar. The religious conflict between the Rohingyas and Buddhists happened particularly in the Muslim-dominated northern part of Rakhine state. In the past few years, the ethnic violence against the Rohingya community has become widespread within Rakhine State which has turned into ethnic cleansing and genocide (Khan, 2017). Facing severe human rights abuses and massive ill-treatment by the military government, Rohingya people sought to take refuge out of Rakhine state in large numbers during various periods such as in the year 1784, 1942, 1978, 1992, 2016, and 2017. Since 25th August 2017, the world started to perceive the plight of Rohingyas as a humanitarian crisis (AKM, and Diotima, 2018: 541-565). With the alarming increase in the number of worldwide refugees, the number of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh has also increased as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that 923,000 Rohingyas have come to Bangladesh between 1978 to 2017 to escape the persecution of Myanmar military (Sattar, 2017). Currently, 967,842 Rohingyas are living in Bangladesh (Global Refugee Forum, 2023).

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1. Burma was renamed Myanmar by the military government in June 1989. Much of the discussion in this paper refers to the period when it was known as Burma. To avoid confusion, both Myanmar and Burma name has been used interchangeably.
 2. Greater Chittagong is a south-eastern district of Bangladesh close to Arakan. During British rule in Arakan, a lot of Bengalis went to Arakan as seasonal laborers but the majority of them came back following the massacre in Arakan.

The international assistance to deal with the Rohingya problem which has been going on for more than six years is on a downward trend and the importance of this global crisis in the international arena has decreased. The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh has now become a huge burden. Besides, post-Covid global instability and rising commodity prices have seriously impacted Bangladesh's economy, security, and socio-political stability. The prolonged presence of a large number of Rohingya people poses threats to the local environment and puts pressure on economic, social, cultural, and health insecurity, human trafficking, and prostitution, drug-related crimes and smuggling, cross-border insurgency, and recruitment of Rohingyas into militancy. Social unrest and security concerns for the host community also emerged from the influx of a large number of Rohingya refugees. The impacts of the crisis are heavier for Bangladesh because Bangladesh herself is an over-populated country and is passing through an economic transition.

The purpose of the present paper is to bring into focus the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh and analyze the post-Covid socio-economic impact on the host community. The paper is divided into five sections including introduction and conclusion. The second section tries to describe the historical background of the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar/Burma. The third section attempts to analyze the Rohingya refugee crisis and Bangladesh. Finally, this paper critically examines the post-Covid impact of the socio-economic of the Rohingya refugees on their host community in Bangladesh in the fourth section.

This paper is descriptive and explanatory and based on secondary sources of data such as books, journals, articles, periodicals, internet sources, and local, national, and international newspapers, magazines, and reports (UNHCR, MSF, Human Rights Watch and Arakan Project), commentaries and documents of government, non-government and international organizations.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ROHINGYA CRISIS IN MYANMAR/BURMA

The origin of the Rohingya people can be traced to the fifteenth century. In the pre-colonial period, Arakan (now Rakhine state) was populated by Muslim Arabic sailors from 788-810 AD and later by Bengalis from the fifteenth to seventeenth century (Ahmad, 2014: 20-25). The harmony between Rohingyas and Arakanese rifted following the Anglo-Burmese war in 1825 AD. This rift was deepened later when the Rohingyas expressed their loyalty to the British, while Arakanese Buddhists sided with the Japanese in the Second World War (Ullah, 2011: 139-161). After the independence from British colonial rule in 1948, Rohingya's claim of separate ethnic identity was recognized by the first democratic government of Premier U Nu (1948-1962). Rohingyas became stateless without a legal nationality in 1962 when the new military ruler General Ne Win (1962-1988) denied them citizenship (Arraiza, 2015: 3). Since 1978, many of them have been forced to migrate to Bangladesh, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Malaysia. Figure 1 shows the extent of the exodus of Rohingyas fleeing Myanmar. Since the late 1970s, nearly one million Rohingya Muslims have fled Myanmar due to widespread persecution.

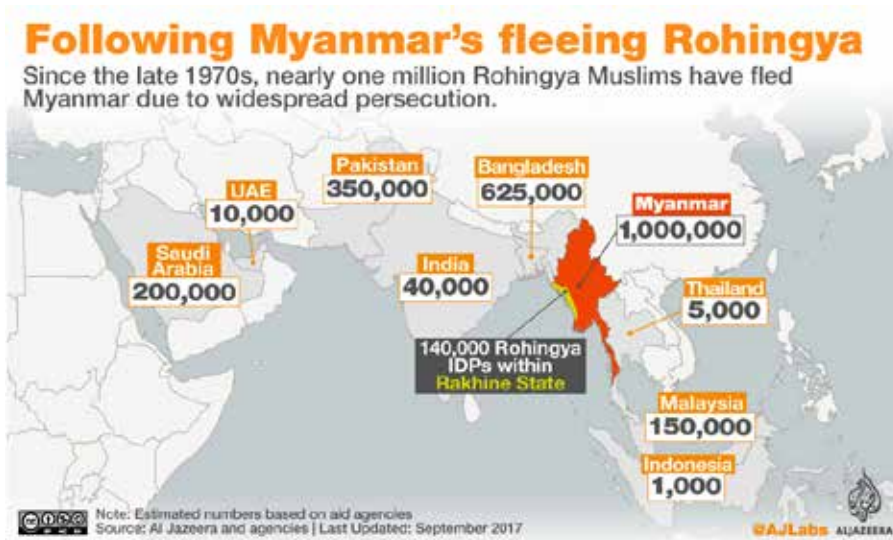


Figure 1: The exodus of Rohingyas from Myanmar

Uncertainty in the lives of Rohingyas took a permanent form after the enactment of the controversial citizenship law the ‘National Citizen Act of 1982’ (Bertelsmann Stiftung Report, 2016). From the provision of the law, it is evident that it was deliberately designed to evict Rohingyas from their ancestral lands (Human Rights Watch, 2000). According to this law, there are three categories of citizenship status:

1. Full citizenship;
2. Associated citizenship; and
3. Naturalized citizenship.

A person is issued a color-coded citizenship security card consistent with his/her citizenship status: Pink, Blue, and Green respectively. A large number of Rohingyas do not fall under any of these three categories (Hossain, 2014: 16-17). The law provides a straightforward definition of citizen in section 2 (B) which the Rohingyas do not fulfill. Even in the process of preparing the voter list for the 1989 general election, a large number of Rohingya Muslims were excluded from the voter list. Thus, the irony of fate is that the Rohingyas have been confined to a cycle of acute discrimination, escape, trafficking, poverty, detention, and deportation.

In Myanmar, most Rohingyas have faced serious violations of human rights including restrictions on freedom of movement and marriage, exclusion from education and healthcare, forced birth control, arbitrary taxation, and forced labor. Rohingyas need to apply for a travel pass to visit a neighboring village and are required to obtain permission for marriage by paying high fees and bribes which can take several years. They are also beaten, tortured, killed, and raped by the Myanmar military. Amnesty International revealed a report in December 2016 which alleged that the Myanmar security forces were carrying out rapes and extrajudicial killings, burning their homes (Djamin, 2017). Many experts allege that Rohingyas are one of the world’s most oppressed and persecuted minority.

ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS AND BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Bangladesh's current population is 165,158,616 (16 crore 51 lakh 58 thousand 616) according to the 'Population and Housing Census 2022' report published by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). The country has a population density of 1,119 people per square kilometer, which ranks ninth in the world. India and Myanmar are the neighboring countries of Bangladesh. It is bordered by India in the west, north, and east and by Myanmar in the southeast.

Bangladesh and Myanmar are the two immediate neighbors. The general assumption is that both countries would have a better and friendly relationship if both had democracy in practice and political stability since their independence. People from both countries crossed their borders for various reasons. For instance, people from southeastern regions of Bangladesh used to go to Myanmar in search of business and economic fortunes and many opted to stay there for life marrying Rohingya women leaving behind even, in many cases, their original families in Bangladesh (Ahmad, 2008: 96-99). However, this situation changed after the independence of Myanmar, especially in the 1960s when the military regime strongly settled down in Myanmar.

In the 1970s, several crackdowns in Rakhine state forced thousands of Rohingya people to run away to neighboring countries particularly Bangladesh. In the 1970s, around 200,000 Rohingya people fled to East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh). After the independence of Bangladesh, the first influx of Rohingya people (approximately 300,000) took place in June 1978 (Amnesty International, 2004). Most of these refugees were repatriated to Myanmar by the end of 1978. Then another large influx took place in the year 1991-1992 when nearly 250,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh amidst reported cases of rapes, forced labor, and religious persecution (Pandey,

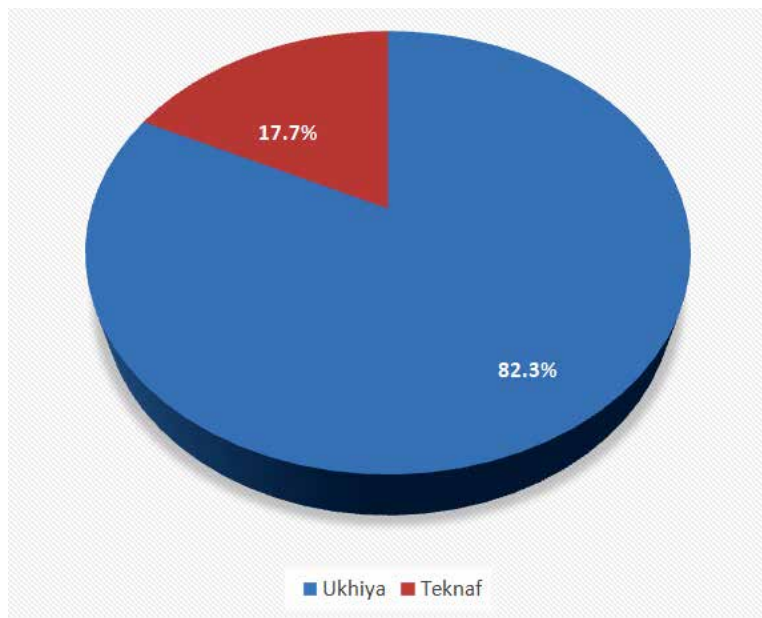


Source: www.aljazeera.com/ (accessed July 2018)

Figure 2: Rohingya exodus from Rakhine state to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

2019). The repatriation process was started by the UNHCR through signing a memorandum of understanding with the Union of Myanmar. However, the process of repatriation was stopped unilaterally by the Myanmar authorities with effect from April 1997. Since then, the remaining Rohingyas have been living in Bangladesh (*The Daily Prothom Alo*, 2019). Figure 2 shows the Rohingya exodus from Rakhine state to Cox's Bazar district.

Bangladesh has two kinds of Rohingya refugees: registered refugees and unregistered refugees. Registered Rohingyas refugees are living in Leda and Khnila camps in Teknaf and Kutupalong refugee camps in Ukhiya Upzillas. Additionally, data show that, at present, 965,467 registered Rohingya refugees are living in Bangladesh (UNHCR Operations Worldwide Report, 2023). Unregistered Rohingya refugees are living almost everywhere in Bangladesh, especially in Cox's Bazar³ district and Chittagong division. These unregistered Rohingyas are often blamed for many illegal activities like terrorism, and felling trees in the forest. They are also accused of engaging as day laborers resulting in lower wages for the local day laborers. Unfortunately, nobody knows the real number of unregistered Rohingya refugees. About 300,000 to 500,000 refugees have been living unregistered in Bangladesh (*Agence France-Presse*, 2015). Even now, several Rohingyas are crossing the border and going to different parts of the country regularly. But there is no special policy for them. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the Rohingya in different areas of Cox's Bazar.



Source: Report on Humanitarian Data Exchange, Inter Sector Coordination Group, 30 June 2021

Figure 3: Distribution of the Rohingya in Cox's Bazar (%)

3. Cox's Bazar is the south-eastern district of Bangladesh along Arakan of Myanmar where the majority of the Rohingyas refugees presently reside.

To enter Bangladesh is easy as Bangladesh-Myanmar border is geographically safe to cross. The boundary of the two countries is shared by water and land border. Most of the Rohingyas cross the water boundary by boat. In this way, hundreds of thousands of unregistered Rohingya refugees entered Bangladesh and are living in Bangladesh after leaving Myanmar decades ago. Meanwhile, the reputation of Bangladesh has considerably suffered in the international arena as some of the unregistered Rohingyas refugees have been found to get involved in nefarious crimes- including the import of Yaba⁴ drugs, and using fake Bangladeshi passports, not to mention the fact that the law-and-order situations in the neighboring areas of the hill tracts have been under threat from a huge potential demographic turmoil.

POST-COVID SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ON HOST COMMUNITY

Bangladesh is a densely populated country with limited land and natural resources. Also, due to rapid urbanization and industrialization, the arable land is shrinking very fast. The prolonged presence of a large number of Rohingya people is putting pressure on the local environment, economic, social, cultural, health, and security of the country. They are creating various kinds of awful problems for Bangladesh especially adverse socio-economic impacts on host communities during the post-Covid period. Because of post-Covid global instability, rising commodity prices have seriously impacted Bangladesh's economy, security, and socio-political stability. The effect of a large number of Rohingya on Bangladesh is highlighted in the following sections.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

The environmental impact of hosting 1.2 million Rohingya refugees is difficult to measure. Environmental degradation is caused mainly by deforestation. The majority of the Rohingya refugee camps are situated in the hillside area. Both registered and unregistered Rohingyas are involved in clearing the forests, cutting the hills for their shelter, residing here and there, and causing significant damage to the environment (*The Daily Kaler Khantho*, 2019). More than 2,000 hectares of forest have been lost due to the influx of some 750,000 Rohingyas since August 2017 (*The Daily Star*, 2019). Forests began to be converted into agricultural land, collection of firewood from forests, extraction of surface and ground waters, fishing and hunting, and production of extra waste threatens human health.

Rohingya refugees impact the host community heavily as every year water level of Ukhia (an upazila of Cox's Bazar district) is dropping. Reportedly drop by 3-5 feet every year has been reported after the Rohingyas influx into Cox's Bazar (Humanitarian Response Plan, 2017- 2018). Because of the intense water demand of a large number of Rohingyas, the level of water could further dip which is a grave concern for both locals and the Rohingya population. Besides, the daily movement of a large number of Rohingyas, aid workers, and humanitarian relief vehicles on the roads, leading from the host communities to the camps, is causing substantial wear and tear on roads and polluting the air of Ukhia and Teknaf.

4. Yaba is an infamous psychedelic drug tablet in South and Southeast Asia that is very popular among youth.

ECONOMIC PRESSURE

The Rohingya crisis has both short and long-term impacts on the local and national economy. Cox's Bazar, being one of the poorly populated cities in Bangladesh, demands extra economic provision in different fields for its development and special treatment from the Bangladesh government and currently has to spend US\$ 300 million per month for the Rohingyas (*The New Age*, 2019) and has a huge potential to create social animosity between the local Bengali and Rohingya communities. Besides, Cox's Bazar being a coastal town attracts tourists and creates job markets for the locals but the presence of a lot of foreign aid workers brought price hikes in the market from where poor locals and day laborers buy their essentials. It creates grave dissatisfaction in their minds which ultimately creates the potential for animosity against the refugees (*The Washington Post*, 2018).

Officially refugees are not allowed to work outside the camp without permission, but many do so unofficially. On the other hand, approximately 200,000 unregistered Rohingyas living in Bangladesh without any relief/assistance, must work in various sectors. Rohingyas have adversely affected the local labor market with the supply of cheap labor and have created an unemployment problem. The Rohingyas control the entire local labor market. They are also involved in smuggling goods such as medicine, narcotics, cosmetics, fertilizer, sugar, and various kinds of electric instruments (*The Daily Prothom Alo*, 2010). Thus, this huge number of Rohingyas refugees are employed in the economy of Bangladesh, and their employability should exert a significant impact on the local economy, and host community and on their gradual integration and mainstreaming in Bangladesh. This is creating social unrest in Cox's Bazar and Bangladesh.

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACT OF THE ROHINGYA INFLUX

Rohingya are influencing the social dimension of culture. Rohingyas and Bangladeshis have a lot of differences in social mores, values, norms, ethics, and belief systems. Although Rohingya refugees are Bangla-speaking people they are not Bangladeshi. Their dialect is a deep mixture of Arabic, Hindi, Urdu, and Persian. Their dress, music, habits, culture, and even religious ceremonies are largely different from those of Bangladeshi people. For example, almost all Bangladeshi women go to schools and their birth rate is low, which is just the opposite for the Rohingya women. Their food diversity level is very low with little consumption of fruits, vegetables, and animal food (*The Daily Star*, 2019). They already have a diluted secular Bengali identity. They are orthodox in their religious belief while Bangladeshis are mostly liberal. Most of the Rohingyas are involved with Islamic religious parties. They are causing political intolerance in the political culture of Bangladesh. Today, Bangladeshis sentiment is not favorable for the cause of the Rohingyas.

IMPACT ON HEALTH

Since the rapid influx of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh began in 2017, myriad health issues among the refugees have arisen. The Rohingya problem is causing an increase in health insecurity. There is a risk of malnutrition and consequential diseases. Malnutrition remains unacceptably high. Among the children aged 6-59 months who fled after August 2017, 32% are chronically undernourished and 13% are acutely undernourished (*The Daily Star*, 2019).

There is always a looming fear of waterborne and other infectious diseases spreading beyond the camps. Any contagious disease, depending on the human host, has the potential to be an epidemic in densely packed camps. Again, many of the Rohingya people are already carrying the germs of several diseases like tuberculosis, skin diseases, HIV/AIDS, etc. (Muniruzzaman, 2017). The experience of refugee settlements in Haiti and Yemen reveals that diseases, along with diarrhea and cholera, could spread to the local population.

SECURITY THREATS

Security is the main concern for Bangladesh. The Rohingya crisis has implications for border security and continuing persecution in Rakhine state is likely to make the border of Bangladesh vulnerable and unstable. The Bangladesh-Myanmar border is also considered a hotbed of insurgency. The Rohingya Muslims of Arakan who have fled Myanmar as refugees and took shelter along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border areas are involved in guerilla activities against the Myanmar government under the banners of numerous guerilla groups. All these indicate that Bangladeshi borders have been experiencing hyperactivities of insurgent groups (Kabir, 2010: 104-131). It was reported that on 13 July 2018, a helicopter from Myanmar had violated the Bangladeshi airspace in Alikadam upazila of Bandarban which is a serious threat to the national security and stability of Bangladesh (*The Daily Dhaka Tribune*, 2018). To mark the second anniversary of the current exodus, on 25 August 2019, about five to seven hundred thousand Rohingyas gathered in the Kutupalong camp, many of them carrying sharp weapons. Though it seemed peaceful, it was a challenge for the Bangladesh government when, in unequivocal terms, they announced that they would not return to Myanmar if their demands were not met. It was not a plea but a challenge and a direct threat to the government of Bangladesh (*The New Age*, 2019).

On the other hand, the huge exodus of Rohingya people can be a potential threat to the internal security of Bangladesh. It cannot be denied that vulnerable Rohingya people are in dire necessity of a livelihood. In this way, they can be involved in various national as well as international 'terrorist' groups and can take the chance to exploit the vulnerable situation, causing disturbance to internal security. In Bangladesh, the Rohingya extremists are working especially in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They have connections with different extremist Islamic groups in Bangladesh (Murshid, 2012: 5-7). They are closely connected with Qwami Madrasah. These Madrasahs are not only educational institutions but also training centers for Islamic militant groups. A lot of Rohingya religious teachers are involved in this training. Their main aim is to set up a separate Muslim state buffer zone in the Arakan region.

The Rohingya camps are fertile grounds for recruitment by Islamic militant groups. Rohingya have no formal and institutional knowledge about the contemporary world. Those who are supposed to be educated know the Quran, Hadith, and Arabic—however, a lack of explanation is rooted in contemporary knowledge. There are great chances for them to be converted easily as 'jihadist' by arousing their feelings of deprivation. Religious extremist groups will then come to fill the vacuum creating the potential to recruit militant groups. Now, Rohingya not only pose a security threat in Bangladesh but also all over South and Southeast Asia because of the allegations against them that they are involved in various conflict zones such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Rohingya refugee crisis has created a potential threat of human trafficking. Human trafficking as a form of organized crime creates security threats for states (Avdan, 2012: 172-173). In Bangladesh, there exists an organized human trafficking network incorporating local Bangladeshis, newly arrived Rohingyas, and the old ones who have been staying in refugee camps for a long time. This contains a high potential for security threats to Bangladesh and the region. As the Rohingyas are stateless and have no legal work opportunities in Bangladesh, they are very vulnerable to human trafficking and forced prostitution. Rohingya children, women, and men are targeted by the traffickers who seek to exploit them in various situations including the sex industry, as unpaid domestic help in homes, guesthouses or hotels, and in other forms of bonded labor (*The Daily Star*, 2018). Rohingya girls are also reportedly transported to Chittagong and Dhaka and transnationally to Kathmandu and Kolkata and subjected to work as sex workers.

Bangladesh has direct air, sea, and road communications with almost all drug-producing countries in the region, Cox Bazar's Naf River is used as the transit route by international drug traffickers and arms smugglers especially by Burmese drug traffickers (*The Daily Star*, 2003). The human trafficking routes active around 2010, are now being used to smuggle desperate Rohingya refugees out of Bangladesh (*The Daily Dhaka Tribune*, 2019). Another great concern is that Rohingyas agree to smuggle the drugs in return for safe passage, or for meager sums of money. Recently, an alarming number of Yaba pills have been seized by the security agencies of Bangladesh, and Rohingya involvement in most of the cases caused fear among Cox's Bazar administration. Moreover, Interpol says that about 5% of the world's drug trafficking is channeled through Bangladesh which is alarming for the national security of Bangladesh.

CONCLUSION

The exodus of the Rohingya people from Myanmar to Bangladesh is nothing new. Bangladesh has been experiencing continuous Rohingya flights into its territory since its inception in 1971. The largest number of Rohingya influx was triggered in 2017. The international assistance to deal with the Rohingya problem which has been going on for more than six years is on a downward trend and the importance of this global crisis in the international arena has decreased. The Rohingya crisis is becoming a huge burden for Bangladesh. The Rohingya crisis has short and long-term impacts on local and national economies and society. It poses a potential threat to the national security of Bangladesh as well as to regional stability.

The local community is suffering from price hikes and local laborers are losing their jobs to refugees. There are risks of malnutrition and diseases. waterborne and other infectious diseases might spread beyond the camps. Rohingyas are involved in clearing the forests, desecrating the hills for their shelter, and residing here and there, thus causing significant damage to the environment. They are disturbing social harmony through many illegal activities. The Rohingya crisis has implications for border security and continuous persecution in Rakhine state is likely to make the border of Bangladesh vulnerable and unstable. They are involved with various national as well as international terrorist groups and can take the chance to exploit the vulnerable situation, causing disturbance to Bangladesh's internal security. The Rohingya

refugee crisis has created a potential threat of human trafficking. Rohingyas are stateless and have no legal work opportunities in Bangladesh. Thus, they are very much vulnerable to human trafficking and forced prostitution.

The Rohingya refugee crisis has put a huge burden on Bangladesh because it is an overpopulated country and is passing through an economic transition. Years of negotiation have failed to resolve the Rohingya refugee crisis. An acceptable solution may take many more years because the process has become complex and Myanmar's response to peaceful repatriation is not satisfactory. On the other hand, each Rohingya family was the owner of a piece of land in Arakan. Only giving back their land with a citizenship right under the Myanmar constitution can fulfill their demands. For a proper solution to the crisis, the Myanmar government must implement the Annan Commission Report and should address the three points of Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for a peaceful future for the people of Rakhine and the region as a whole. International bodies like the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), ASEAN, OIC, and others ought to play a more active role in pressuring the Myanmar government to obey international laws regarding human rights and stop the persecution of Rohingya in Arakan. Otherwise, Bangladesh as a host of a huge number of Rohingya refugees will suffer socio-politically in the long run with its already existing multidimensional problems.

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A LEGAL ANALYSIS OF THE SUITABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) AS A RURAL DISPUTE MECHANISM IN BANGLADESH

*Kanak Kanti Karmakar**

ABSTRACT

Almost every nation in the world has integrated ADR into its justice delivery system by reducing administrative and legal barriers and strengthening oversight processes, Bangladesh is fast adopting the mechanism. Recently, Bangladesh has placed a renewed focus on Alternative Dispute Resolution programs as a method of avoiding contentious hearings in formal litigation and ensuring universal access to justice in an efficient manner. Rural conflicts are generally characterized as social issues because these stem from misunderstandings, misperceptions, and long-held traditional attitudes regarding specific themes. The purpose of this paper is to find out the present loopholes like; no appropriate panel to specify the protocol, or no well-defined norms to ADR. Moreover, there is no provision to impose sanction for refusal of negotiation without genuine explanation. This paper recommends some possible solutions like: proper monitoring, review board for implementing verdict, to protect the parties from high cost, time, and energy.

Keywords: ADR, Artha Rin Adalat Ain, European Commission, justice, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Union Parishod.

INTRODUCTION

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is a word that refers to a set of strategies and procedures for settling conflicts without resorting to litigation. ADR is an all-encompassing term which refers to multiple non-judicial methods of handling conflict between parties.¹ Examples of ADR are mediation, arbitration, neutral evaluation, negotiation, and conciliation.

Due to ADR's ability to make decisions more quickly and economically, it has gained significant popularity among commercial and social parties worldwide. While those techniques have drawbacks, the benefits are widespread and widely regarded as the most effective. The major forms of ADR and their characteristics are well-known to law practitioners and lawyers

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alike. Thus, ADR plays a critical role in resolving a dispute or conflict.

Justice Mustafa Kamal has long been concerned about the increasing backlog of cases, which has hampered court judgments and deprived many people access to justice. J. Mustafa Kamal founded The Bangladesh Legal Study Group (BLSG) shortly after retirement as Chief Justice in Bangladesh, with the purpose of integrating Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), specifically mediation, within Bangladesh's legal and judicial processes.² In the years that followed, he made the initiative to introduce ADR to Bangladesh. From the beginning, Justice Mustafa Kamal has been devoted to promoting the benefits of mediation and other kinds of alternative dispute resolution in order to reduce case backlogs and make justice more accessible to the citizen of our country³.

If we look at world history, we can see numerous civilizations that lacked legal institutions for ensuring social order, peace, and harmony. At the time, an alternative dispute resolution system was developed in order to avoid the complexities of the formal justice system. During that time period, some civilizations employed an alternative dispute resolution system⁴. For instance:

- The Sumerian Civilization (emerged about 4000 B.C)
- The Babylonian Civilization (developed about 2123 to 2081 B.C)
- The Egyptian Civilization (developed around 3200 B.C.)
- The Persian Civilization
- The Chinese Civilization (emerged around 3000 B.C.)
- The Greek Civilization
- The Roman Civilization

After this civilization era, the development of the ADR system in present day Bangladesh can be divided into three segments⁵. Such as:

The latest segment that means ADR in Modern Bengal can also be discussed into three periods. Namely:

- ADR in British Era
- ADR in Pakistan Era
- ADR after independence of Bangladesh.

As modern justice systems have grown overburdened, expensive, time-consuming, and unable to offer people with the justice they expect, the Alternative Dispute Resolution system has emerged as a court-annexed method to provide people with rapid and inexpensive justice.

Literature Review:

The process of identifying, reading, and evaluating the extent of literature in a particular area of interest is known as a literature review. A review of concepts and theories, as well as past study findings, is referred to as a literature review.

Professor Dr. Jamila A. Chowdhury in her work has categorized the practice of Alternative

Dispute Resolution mechanisms into three parts, namely: Formal ADR Practice in Bangladesh, Quasi-formal ADR Practice in Bangladesh, Informal ADR Practice in Bangladesh.⁶ In the informal portion of ADR practice, she discusses the application of ADR processes under *Shalish* in the rural village, many modalities of ADR practice, the obligations of *Shalish* rulings, and the flaws in the *Shalish* process. Additionally, author mentions the *Shalish* NGO process as follows:

- Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA)⁷
- Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)⁸
- Bangladesh National Women Lawyer's Association (BNWLA)⁹
- Ain o Shalish Kendro (ASK)¹⁰
- Bachte Sekha (BS)¹¹

To restore peace and harmony in rural areas through the ADR process, author offers several approaches in her writings, including the following: to establish the binding nature of conflicts that are resolved outside the courtroom. She provides two examples to substantiate this assertion. For example, in Japan, spouses mutually agree on their divorce through a discussion process and then register the divorce with their local authority to give it a binding nature. In Egypt, spouses may end their marriage status and even establish custody of their children with mutual permission.

However, she makes no reference to or clarification of any recommended ADR model for institutionalization. In other words, the establishment of any obligatory responsibilities for rural area residents has not been formulated. In this paper, it is intended to offer set of rules for alternative dispute resolution with the goal of implementing the intrinsic meaning or purpose of the ADR system and lowering the backlog of cases in our formal judicial system.

Dr.A.B.M. Mahmudul Hoque, in his writings regarding the ADR, has identified some classifications namely: Formal or Judicial ADR, Quasi-formal or Statutory ADR, Informal or Non-formal ADR.¹²

In informal ADR process, he intends to implement of ADR mechanisms in the village arena through the local government bodies, the NGOs and so forth. He also refers that there is a lacuna of distinct infrastructure or institutional establishment in our present legal system. Moreover, the village court members do not pursue the procedural rules of the state. The biases towards the relatives and members of the local area are a common matter in the rural area. Finally, he suggests using an ADR model to settle rural issues at the Union or Upazila level.

In reality, the enforceability of agreements reached through mediation is non-existent. There is no attempt to bind the parties in any way. There is no mechanism through which the authority can create an environment devoid of political influence for the parties. As a result, in this paper, an attempt has been made to find out loopholes & set up rules in which the enforceability mechanisms and the impact of political influence are given top attention.

Md. Habib Alam discusses the emergence of the implications and practice of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for the purposes of implementing civil justice and eradicating suit

backlogs in Bangladesh's dispute resolution system.¹³ He states in the section on informal justice system that the adjudication process under *Village Court Act 2006* is based on the informal traditional *Shalish* system, which is considered to be an ADR. In contrast to formal judicial adjudication, the Village Court is not bound by evidence law or other procedural law. As a result, there does not appear to be any difficulty in providing simple and expeditious rural justice through these forums, which may be viewed as forums of alternative dispute resolution¹⁴.

However, he fails to clarify or mention any mechanisms for enforcing the rules and regulations governing the ADR process. That is why, once the mediators' decision is finalized, the people are unable to follow the order. In this paper, it has been proposed to have implementation mechanisms of enforceability.

Bashir Ahmed and Mohammad Tarikul Islam have discussed the effectiveness of the existing local justice system in the rural sector in their writings ADR¹⁵. They mention the prevalent impediments to *Shalish* in rural Bangladesh, as well as undue influence in the name of patron client relations, political parties, and social prejudice, the village court may be a viable alternative for facilitating local arbitration and ensuring a level playing field for contending parties.

The formal legal system in Bangladesh is clearly overburdened, with inadequate officials and employees to appropriately manage the task. As a consequence, a half-million cases languishing in multiple courts indicate the inefficiency of existing procedure. He also mentions that the practice of creating village courts has grown in popularity and those locally elected officials are far more receptive and interested in doing so. The Ministry of Local Government Division (LGD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the European Commission partnered on a project called "Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh" which assists the justice system in 500 Union Parishads (UP) across the country¹⁶.

Though they discuss the traditional *Shalish* system, the NGO-based *Shalish* system, the village court system, the effects of undue influence, and the capability of judicious judgment; the agreements reached through mediation are not enforceable. There is no attempt made to bind the parties, no way for the authority to create an environment free of political influence. This paper proposes monitoring mechanisms of enforceability and independence from political influence to minimize such deficiencies¹⁷.

Research Objectives:

- (i) To identify the challenges of existing ADR mechanism in Bangladesh;
- (ii) To study the existing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms in Bangladesh for promoting Access to Justice;
- (iii) To analyze the effectiveness of ADR system as rural dispute resolution process for reducing caseload in Bangladesh.

Research Questions

- (a) What are the challenges in practicing the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system in Bangladesh?

- (b) What are the existing Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms in Bangladesh?
- (c) To what extent Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system can be an effective way as rural dispute mechanism for reducing caseload in Bangladesh?

Scope of the Research

With some improvements, the long-serving traditional *Shalish* system can be trusted to reconstruct the local level justice dispensing mechanism. The ADR technique has been effectively employed in financial, commercial, revenue-related, and family-related conflicts. Its utility in petty civil and criminal disputes in rural areas is undisputable. The institutionalization of village level ADR in Bangladesh is less explored in the academic setting. Because this is a new and exploratory study, participants are drawn from a variety of backgrounds, including *Shalish* stakeholders, practitioners, experts/academicians, and people's representatives, as well as members of the policymaking and implementation sides. The cross-validation of responses from a wide range of people may help to speed up the process of institutionalizing *Shalish*¹⁸.

Among these, the following concerns have been given consideration for the goal of reviewing the overall legal structure of Village Court,¹⁹ namely-

- Access to Justice
- Institutionalizing the ADR system in rural area
- Separation of Judiciary
- Restorative Justice
- Socio-economic condition and
- Domestic Violence

THE CHALLENGES OF EXISTING ADR MECHANISM IN BANGLADESH IN RURAL AREAS

Existing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Mechanisms

There are three primary kinds of Alternative Dispute Resolution practices in Bangladesh, each of which may be characterized as follows: (i) Formal or Judicial ADR, (ii) Statutory ADR or Quasi Formal, (iii) Informal ADR or Non-Statutory ADR²⁰.

Status of ADR	Relevant Legislation	Relevant Sections	Methods Applied	Major Role
Formal or Judicial ADR	The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2003	Sec 89A, 89B, 89C	Arbitration or Mediation	The court itself or a third-party mediator may mediate a dispute.
	Artha Rin Adalat Ain, 2003	Sec. 21-25	Mediation	The court itself or a third-party mediator may mediate a dispute.
	The Family Courts Ordinance, 1985	Sec.10 (3), (4), 13	Reconciliation	By the court itself

Statutory ADR or Quasi Formal	The Village Court Act, 2006	Sec. 1, 2	Civil and criminal adjudicatory jurisdiction in specified area	Union Parishad
	Arbitration Act, 2001	Sec. 23	Arbitration	Arbitration Tribunal
	The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961	Sec. 2(a), 6, 7(4), 9(1)	Arbitration	Union Parishad and Paurashava
Informal ADR	The Local Government	Sec. 14(j)	<i>Shalish</i> or Mediation	Union Parishad and Paurashava
	Informal ADR by NGOs in Civil & compoundable Criminal offences		Mediation or moderate <i>Shalish</i>	NGO Mediators
	Criminal Procedure Code, 1898	Sec. 345		Compounding of complaints

Administrative Challenges:

- To maintain the rule of law is the main hurdle to ADR in Bangladesh. Alternative dispute resolution(ADR) strategies are used to settle disagreements. The rule of law is mostly missing or non-existent. Because it is mainly concerned with resolving conflicts, it may deal with comparable challenges in various ways. And the due process of law is not followed in alternative dispute resolution.²¹
- In a culture where there is a power imbalance between the warring parties, it is one of the most difficult components to ensure that ADR is effectively implemented and made functional. Even if the imbalance is not due to discriminatory cultural norms at the time, alternative dispute resolution systems will fail to protect the legal and procedural rights of the weaker parties. Stronger parties with more money and power may compel the weaker party to accept a less desirable outcome.
- In the case of a multi-party conflict, it is difficult to include all interested parties in an alternative dispute resolution mechanism. In a land dispute, ownership is a critical fact to consider, and the party in possession, whether right or wrong, is often disinterested in alternative conflict resolution since he derives pleasure from the property's productive capacity. As a consequence, involving the party with larger possession in alternative dispute resolution is very difficult.
- The vast majority of land litigants, especially those in rural areas, are illiterate and uninformed about the nature and advantages of alternative dispute resolution. For ADR to be successful in Bangladesh's rural areas, it is critical that the public be made aware of its existence.

- It is one of the most typical causes for litigation delays because lawyers use dilatory strategies. It is critical to include the interested parties' pleaders in the resolution of conflicts via formal or informal alternative dispute resolution (ADR), however the role of legal professionals in settling disputes outside of the court system is currently underdeveloped in Bangladesh.

Legal Challenges:

- According to the **Code of Civil Procedure 1908**, when all the contending parties come before the court, the court must mediate the disagreement or submit the matter to the Legal Aid Officer, the parties' pleader, or the mediators from the panel to mediate, whichever is appropriate. However, if either of the parties fails to come before the court, there is no option for the court to force them to do so.²²
- The court will choose the technique to be used, whether it is a legal assistance officer, a pleader, or panel mediators. The panel will set the procedure for the mediation process, whether it is conducted by an attorney-assisted mediator, a pleader, or panel mediators. There are no defined norms, laws, or systems in place to ensure the mediation process is performed appropriately.
- In accordance with **sections 89A and 89C of the Civil Procedure Code**, mediation is permitted throughout the pre-trial and appellate phases, but not after the trial has concluded and prior to the pronouncement of the verdict. However, it is possible that parties will realize the merits of their argument after the trial has concluded.²³
- If the mediation fails, Section 89A(7) specifies that the action must be reopened from the place where it was before the referral for mediation. It is also uncommon for parties to resign from mediation without giving any explanation, leaving the mediator with little alternative except to send the matter to court. This prolongs the litigation, but there is no provision in the agreement that punishes the party that purposefully withdraws from mediation.
- In most situations, attorneys are opposed to ADR since it means their revenue will be lowered if the dispute is resolved. In many cases, lawyers misdirect or prevent their clients from exploring alternative dispute resolution, but there is no provision in the law assuring the lawyer's liability in the event of ADR failure due to the lawyers' reluctance.
- The restriction of jurisdiction in village court is the most significant obstacle in the path of alternative dispute resolution. Land disputes in which the value of the property does not exceed Tk. 75,000 may be addressed via mediation. It does not have jurisdiction over each and all land-related conflicts that may arise.

Identifying the ancient rural era's Difficulties

Since ancient times, the headmen of villages or localities have been tasked with settling conflicts among the residents of their respective communities. The adjudication methods that they followed were nearly identical to those used in mediation and arbitration. One of the most distinguishing characteristics of this historic system is that it was a recognized system

of administration of justice, rather than just a substitute for the official court system as is the case now. During the ancient time, there were various difficulties with relation to the alternate conflict settlement procedure.²⁴ As an example:

Unawareness About the Situation

Without widespread awareness of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and its procedures among the public, prospective employers and customers are significantly less inclined to hire the field's emerging experts.

Uncertainty Regarding Entry Paths

When recruiting professionals are unfamiliar with alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and the practical, multidisciplinary skills that ADR practitioners can provide, this may be very challenging.

Insufficiency of Infrastructure

It was discovered that there was no distinct office for the village courts and no designated location for the performance of judicial activities during that ancient period.

Identifying the Difficulties Being Faced in the Modern Era

It is not new in Bangladesh to resolve disputes outside of the court system; non-judicial and indigenous conflict settlement techniques have been employed by the society for a very long time. However, the most significant issue is that there is no consistent alternative dispute resolution statute in Bangladesh. Different dispute resolution techniques and procedures have been mandated by different pieces of law in order to resolve the disagreement. For the individual who serves as a neutral mediator or conciliator, this presents a dilemma, since all processes change in various situations. When persons who are participating in an ADR process are not adequately trained, they may lack the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively supervise and persuade the disputants to reach a settlement. It is because of this that the vulnerable party does not get adequate justice.²⁵

THE EXISTING ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS IN BANGLADESH PROMOTING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

3.1 Legal Analysis of existing ADR Mechanisms in Bangladesh

Several methods of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) that are employed in Bangladesh may be divided into following three broad groups:

- Judicial or Formal ADR
- Statutory ADR or Quasi-Formal ADR
- Informal ADR

Judicial or Formal ADR:

This type of alternative dispute resolution refers to conflict settlement methods that are outlined in legislation and are carried out by a court of law or by a third party. It may also be broken down into three sections. As an example:

- The **Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act of 2003²⁶**- The **Code of Civil Procedure in 2003** was changed to include mediation under **Section 89A**, arbitration under **Section 89B**, and mediation in appeal under **Section 89C**. All these methods have been annexed to the court system and have been made applicable in all types of non-family litigation. **Section 89A** allows for mediation to take place prior to a trial, while arbitration may be used at any point of the litigation process²⁷.
- The **Artha Rin Adalat Ain of 2003²⁸**: The *Artha rin Adalat Ain* also known as Money Loan Recovery Act was passed in 2003 with built-in options for alternative dispute resolution. The procedure consisted of a settlement conference, which was presided over by a trial judge and conducted in closed session. The details of the proceedings were being kept under wraps. As this system proved ineffectual, the current administration revised the legislation in 2010 to enable mediation in lieu of a settlement conference, which was previously prohibited. As a result, additional restrictions were inserted into the Loan Recovery Act, 2003, namely sections 22 and 23.
- The **Family Courts Ordinance of 1985**: The Family Court Ordinance establishes a system for reconciliation via the use of judges as a crucial aspect of the legal process in family court cases (court annexed ADR). It contains a built-in conciliation process that enables disputing parties to address the remaining problem informally, inconspicuously, and with a feeling of accommodation, in which the family Courts act as a well-wisher and friend rather than as an adjudicator, rather than adjudication.²⁹ In the case of **Khudeza Begum vs. Md. Abdul Jalil**, the victim deprived from dower & maintenance for herself and child. Afterwards the victim filed a suit to the concerned court. The court, in the ADR segment, sent it for compromise. And ultimately the parties succeeded to solve the matter through ADR³⁰.

Statutory or Quasi-Formal ADR

Quasi-formal or Statutory Alternative Dispute Resolution is defined as those cases in which the application, jurisdictions, and procedural methods relating to dispute resolution are regulated by a statute but are conducted by another judicial body that is not a part of the formal judicial structure of the country in question.³¹ It is further subdivided into the following industries. As an example:

- The **Village Court Act of 2006**: The **Village Court Act of 2006**(Amendment 2013) which makes reference to the phrase ‘village court’ for the first time. The Chairman of the Union Parishad, who would create a village court with a total of five members, will hear any issue brought before him by any party to the conflict. The Chairman of the Union Parishad will preside over the village court, and each political party will choose two members from among themselves, one of whom must be a member of the Union Parishad. The court’s judgment is made on the basis of a majority of the votes cast. Unless otherwise mentioned in the schedule, the court has jurisdiction over all small civil and criminal issues. The court does not have the authority to sentence someone to jail. In the event of a land conflict,³² it has jurisdiction only if the subject-matter has a value of less than **TK 75,000**/(sec 07) and it has the authority to order compensation for property damage caused by cattle as well as

the restitution of immovable property in certain circumstances. A pleader could not be hired by a party in order to represent them at the village court.³³

- **The Arbitration Act of 2001:** The Arbitration Act of 1940 was in effect in Bangladesh until the Arbitration Act of 2001 was adopted, which took effect in 2002. According to Section 23 of the Arbitration Act 2001, the arbitration process that must be followed under this Act is explained in detail. It was primarily created to facilitate the conduct of commercial and international arbitration proceedings. Other types of domestic arbitration, on the other hand, are permitted to be conducted under this Act. According to Section 89 B of the Civil Procedure Code, the Arbitration Act of 2001 may also be utilized to resolve civil issues that have been submitted to arbitration.³⁴
- **The Muslim Family Laws Ordinance of 1961:** In accordance with the Muslim Family Law Ordinance of 1961, provision for reconciliation via an arbitration council, which is not a component of judicial alternative dispute resolution but is administrative under character, has been made in three instances,³⁵ that includes inter alia, (i) polygamy as defined by Section 6. (ii) dissolution of marriage (divorce) and the imposition of the divorce decree according to Section 7. (iii) husband's inability to pay for his wife's upkeep as required under Section 9.

Informal ADR

Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques, such as informal and non-formal methods, are used in criminal cases as well as at the community level in both civil and criminal cases. Informal and non-formal methods are used to settle disputes in both civil and criminal cases. Furthermore, it may be divided into the following categories³⁶: For example:

- **The Local Government-** Bangladesh is divided into six territorial administrative divisions, each of which contains 64 districts and more than 85,650 villages. These numbers are significant because a significant number of informal dispute resolutions occur in Bangladesh, with local government members playing a key role in the process. **Section 14(j) of the Local Government (Gram Parishad) Act, 1997** entrusts the duty of amicably settling local conflicts to the members of the local government.³⁷
- **Informal ADR by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on civil and compoundable criminal offences-** In general, non-governmental organization (NGO) mediation is carried out by NGO employees who have been educated in legal and social justice knowledge as well as mediation abilities. Feminist mediators are actively sought after by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to participate in their mediation programs particularly in situations concerning women's rights, family conflicts, and other concerns of gender equality. A broad variety of civil problems as well as different criminal concerns are covered by these mediations, which are permitted under Bangladeshi law to be resolved by negotiation or mediation.³⁸
- **The Criminal Procedure Code of 1898-** There are a large number of criminal cases that are compoundable under the law. However, there was no institutional venue or organization in our nation to resolve those matters that were compoundable. Sometimes the plaintiffs

in criminal cases are unable to locate a formal or informal venue in which to resolve their case, and as a result, they are sentenced to many years in prison for a relatively minor offence, or even for not having committed any crime at all.³⁹ As stated in **Md Joynal and ors vs. Md Rustam Ali Mia and ors**⁴⁰, the Appellate Division of the Bangladesh Supreme Court held that:

- *“Our Criminal Administration of Justice encourages the compromise of certain disputes and even the compounding of certain offences as provided by Section 345 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Shalish, also known as a compromise, has been used in the settling of disputes in this subcontinent from the beginning of time”.*
- ADR may take on a variety of forms, including hybrid forms. These hybrid modes were created by improvising a combination of three fundamental kinds of ADR. Negotiation, mediation, and arbitration are the three types of dispute resolution. In order to keep up with the developments, hybrid types of ADR are being developed over time. So, it is not feasible to explore all of the many hybrid ADR forms that may occur in the actual world at the present time. The following are examples of hybrid versions of ADR⁴¹: early neutral evaluation, fact finding, Med-Arb, mini-trial procedure, settlement conference, negotiated rule making, and private judging.

ADR systems across the World

The use of Arbitration for the settlement of business disputes has been used throughout history, but it was not until the mid-1980s that it was recognized as a contemporary dispute resolution mechanism, first in the United States and later in Canada. Due to the high expense and unpredictability of the legal system at the time, it happened as a consequence. Because of this, the firm has had constant growth around the world since its inception in 1908.

ADR in the United States of America (USA)

As a court-ordered process, mediation is used in the United States by the American Courts, the American Bar Association, and other organizations. This method has been found to be effective in a variety of cases, including simple money claims, sexual harassment complaints, and disputes regarding custody battles in the case of divorcing couples who have filed for divorce.⁴²

ADR in the United Kingdom

ADR arose in the United Kingdom partially as a result of issues arising from the cumbersome and costly process of civil litigation, and partly as a result of difficulties arising from lawyer-dominated arbitration. Among the techniques extensively employed in the United Kingdom are international mediation with standard forms, mini-trial, and executive tribunal, mediated settlement leading to a consensual arbitration award, med-arb and a variety of other options. The Centre for Dispute Resolution (CEDR) is a newly founded organization that provides mediation services to businesses in the United Kingdom.⁴³

ADR in Canada

There are many similarities between Canada's judicial system and that of both America and the United Kingdom. In Canada, there are two separate and distinct judicial systems: Federal

and provincial governments, for example. A movement towards alternative conflict resolution is emerging in Canada as a result of the high cost and protracted nature of traditional dispute settlement. Alternative dispute resolution techniques, such as mediation and arbitration, are increasingly being utilized to handle business and non-commercial issues, rather than going to court. Most of the time, such alternate procedures is voluntarily implemented.⁴⁴

ADR in India

Because Indian courts are slow, ADR methods are rapidly emerging. In the mid-1980s, the Indian government established Lok Adalat under the Legal Service Authorities Act to institutionalize ADR. It was formed to employ conciliation and negotiation to settle disagreements. It takes matters pending in conventional courts within its jurisdiction that may be settled via conciliation and compromise. It is chaired by a judge or retired judge, with two additional members who are usually a lawyer and a social worker and is open to the public. There is no court fee to pay. Even though the lawsuit has already been filed in the conventional court, the Lok Adalat may be able to address the matter. In this case, the fee is refunded.

ADR in International Fora

ADR is also practiced in the following locations, which are listed in a brief chart⁴⁵.

Convention	Provisions	Types of ADR	Conducted By
UN Charter	Article 33	Negotiation, Mediation, Arbitration & Conciliation	The Security Council
ICCPR	Article 42	Conciliation	Conciliation Commission
WTO	Section 08	Arbitration	Arbitration Panel
WIPO	Rule 01-02	Negotiation, Mediation & Arbitration	WIPO Arbitration & Mediation Centre

Access to Justice

Justice delayed is justice denied. As a result, effective justice should be delivered as quickly as possible. Not only should accessible justice be quick, but it should also be inexpensive. In order to be considered accessible justice, criteria should be to make justice more easily accessible, simpler to grasp, faster to provide, and more certain⁴⁶.

- **Access to Justice under the Constitution of Bangladesh-** Obtaining justice is emphasized in several articles of the **Constitution of the Bangladesh**⁴⁷, which serves as the ultimate law of the nations and is referred as such, “the right to seek justice”. All citizens, according to **Article 27** of the Constitution of the United States, are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the laws. A basic right to equal protection under the law is guaranteed by Bangladesh’s Constitution, which states in **Article 31** that every citizen of the nation has the fundamental right. Despite the fact that the term ‘access to justice’ is not defined directly in these Articles, the substance of the phrase is merged with the phrases ‘equal protection under the law’ and ‘protection of the law’ to form the phrase ‘*access to justice*’. When the two Articles are read together, it is plausible to assume that people’s right to seek justice is non-alienable and equal regardless of their socioeconomic level or

income, which is consistent with the Constitution.⁴⁸

- **Access to Justice under the UDHR, 1948-** Upon unanimous approval by the **United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948 in Paris, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** was formally adopted and became known as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “everyone has the right to be recognized as a person before the law, regardless of “wherever he or she may be”. As a further measure, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits any kind of discrimination in the administration of justice to any individual, regardless of race or ethnic origin⁴⁹.
- **Access to Justice under the ICCPR, 1966-** According to the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**, “Everyone should have the right to be recognized as a person under the law wherever he or she may be located”.

The Barriers of Access to Justice and the Notion of ADR

In Bangladesh, the protracted duration of judicial processes continues to be a significant impediment to access to justice. Another element that makes it difficult for individuals to get justice is the high expense of the dispute resolution procedure. In part, this is due to the fact that we live in a “*system in which money often counts more than qualities*”. To give an example, while more than 50% of family court lawyers charge fees greater than taka 10,000 to resolve cases through litigation, it can be said that in such cases, more than 95 percent of cases involving alternative dispute resolution can be resolved through a lawyer charging a fee equal to or less than taka 5,000⁵⁰. Many poor and disadvantaged individuals in Bangladesh continue to be unable to access the legal system via the established channels, making it important to develop other methods of ensuring that impoverished people have access to justice. At the moment, great attention is being dedicated to methods in which conflict resolution procedures might be made more efficient. The current resurgence of interest indicates the need for conflict resolution methods that are up to date with the times, which are now lacking. This interest is primarily the result of the constant worries of attorneys, judges, governments, and the general public about ensuring that conflicts are settled in the most efficient manner possible. Instead of using the traditional judicial system to resolve disputes, the industrialized nations established alternative procedures for settling disputes peacefully. As a result, this movement is gaining traction throughout the globe, and the general public is becoming more interested in settling issues via Alternative Dispute Resolution methods in order to expedite the resolution of disputes.⁵¹

EFFECTIVENESS OF ADR SYSTEM AS RURAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR REDUCING CASE LOAD IN BANGLADESH

Effectiveness in Rural Area

The Village Court Act is being revised. It is practically imperative that the regulations of village court be reviewed and amended for the court to become more effective and efficient as the one and only operational judicial system in rural regions. In this context, the report calls for the following reforms:

- Increase the number of members on the judge panel from 5 to 10. The panel would be composed of one chairman (the UP chairman), one vice chairman (a woman member of UP who would serve on a one-year rotating basis), three members nominated by each service seeker party (at least one member from each party will be a member of the UP), one permanent member (appointed by the state as civil service employer), and one local school teacher (nominated by the UNO)⁵².
- This composition might be a policy to reduce the biasness and undue influence of the chairman over the VCs in the organization. The village court's adjudication authority should be expanded, particularly in financial matters.
- In addition to VC, a review mechanism for animus judgments, as well as a review board for verdict, should be implemented in the informal settings to complement VC. In reviewing VCs' decisions, the review board will function similar to a High Court division, with the following members: two persons from NGO working in the concerned Upazila Parishad, two members from the Upazila Parishad (nominated by the Upazila Chairman), and two retired public service officers. The review board should have a three-year term and should submit its findings to the chairman of the Upazila Parishad. If the review board's decision is not upheld, the party may file an appeal in accordance with Section 8 of the Village court law of 2006.

The Role of Village Court on Effectiveness of ADR system as rural dispute resolution:

- **Manpower and logistical support in sufficient quantities-** The Village Court should have full logistical assistance from the government to accomplish the desired outcome. Every village court should have its own courtroom, with extra conveniences like a computer for archiving documents and internet connection. A standard training package (including on-the-job training) that provides proper legal knowledge of the village court procedure may assist all parties. The government may appoint a secretary and a court assistant to manage the village court's official business. It is recommended that a separate budget structure be established for village court in order to sustain all of these items.
- **In order to provide a proper and systematic monitoring system-** In order to guarantee openness and accountability, the village court must have a robust and systematic monitoring mechanism, which is currently not in the required shape or character to perform its functions effectively. A monitoring cell under the supervision of the Upazila Administration may be established, which will have exclusive power for holding a three-monthly review meeting on the affairs in the presence of all VC bodies in the affected region. This cell will serve as the local point of contact for VC. The ministry will also get a report from the unit, which should include information on difficulties arising with regard to VC. If the cell discovers anything out of the ordinary, it should have the authority to take urgent action while consulting with the ministry as soon as possible.
- **A system of cooperation between the Village Court and the Law Enforcement Agencies:** The law enforcement forces of Bangladesh, particularly the police, are not very cooperative with the village court. The VC does not have the ability to compel the parties to take their summons into consideration, and as a result, parties are frequently unwilling

to appear in court. The coordination between the village court and the law enforcement authorities takes on a much-needed formality in this instance. Upon refusal of a court summons by a party, the court will make a record of the refusal and forward it to the police station. Following receipt of the notice, the police will take the necessary steps to assist the court in this matter⁵³.

The role of ADR In Reducing Caseload in Bangladesh

The major goal of the ADR movement is the avoidance of vexatious legal process, expenditure, and delay, as well as the promotion of the concept of universal access to justice. Listed below are some scenarios in which Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) may be used effectively to minimize the number of cases filed in Bangladesh⁵⁴:

Backlog Litigation and Solution to the Problem:

ADR processes aid in the reduction of the burden of the courts, allowing them to devote more time and attention to matters that should be determined by the courts. In an ideal world, Bangladesh's courts of law would only deal with constitutional concerns, such as writ proceedings, difficult civil and serious criminal offences, and appeals, with no authority to intervene. Arbitration, conciliation, and other dispute resolution procedures should be used for any other matters⁵⁵.

Speed and economy are important considerations:

ADR is distinguished by its efficiency and rapidity. Party autonomy may also result in a speedier process since parties are allowed to create the most effective dispute resolution processes for their situation. This may result in a reduction in material costs. As a result, alternative dispute resolution techniques may save the parties both time and money.

Use of Single Procedure

An agreement to settle a dispute involving intellectual property that is protected in many jurisdictions may be arrived via Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). This avoids the price and complexity of multi-jurisdictional litigation, as well as the danger of uneven outcomes⁵⁶.

Informality

The Alternative Dispute Resolution procedure takes place in a more casual and relaxed environment. It is not governed by a sophisticated set of rules or by formal rules of evidence, as might be expected. The relaxation of the norms of evidence often results in a more relaxed environment⁵⁷.

Win-Win Situation Provided by Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):

When a lawsuit is filed, one party wins and the other loses the case. In ADR, on the other hand, there are no losers or winners. It is a win-win scenario for both the parties. As a consequence, many alternative dispute resolution methods do not end in the extreme outcome of litigation, where one party receives everything and the other receives nothing, but rather result in a settlement that benefits both parties⁵⁸.

The Role of Some NGOs for reducing backlog in Bangladesh

Nowadays, one can observe that several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are working in the legal field, and they have a variety of programs to assist impoverished and distressed individuals in obtaining justice. Some of them have Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs, particularly mediation programs, and some of them also have legal aid schemes to assist the poor and those in trouble. The actions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in mediation are described as follow⁵⁹:

- **The Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)** - BLAST started operating in 1993 and now has offices in all major Bangladeshi cities and towns. This includes labor law, family law, and governmental maltreatment of prison inmates. When a client's effort at mediation fails, BLAST often provides legal support and advocacy services. BLAST offers a people-centered modal mediation technique that also adheres with the jurisprudence standards of the countries in which it works.⁶⁰
- **The Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA)** - BNWLA is a grassroots organization that works to protect and promote women's rights via legal assistance and non-governmental organization mediation. Furthermore, the Bangladesh National Women's Law Association (BNWLA) participates in many national awareness-raising activities to improve access to justice in the community, and it publishes topics relating to domestic and state violence on a regular basis.⁶¹
- **Ain-o-Shalish Kendro (ASK)**- ASK is another well-known human rights organization that not only offers mediation services but also works on other human rights issues. However, via its Gender and Social Justice Project, it also raises awareness of the issue of women's rights violations among local government officials and law enforcement officers. ASK also works to establish relationships amongst local residents, particularly journalists and attorneys, who are responsible for monitoring human rights enforcement mechanisms. As a result, ASK is trying to change the attitudes of society toward women so that they may get more benefits from the execution of the legislation.⁶²
- **Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA)** - The MLAA was founded in 1978 and is generally recognized as a pioneer in introducing non-judicial conflict settlement in Bangladesh (NGOs). In order to provide more fair justice for everyone, local elites, comprising primary school teachers and madarasa (religious school) students, formed a mediation committee (World Bank). 2001 MLAA-trained para-legals also observed mediation sessions to ensure women were actively engaging. Since its inception in 1978, the MLAA has helped local communities settle issues via mediation while simultaneously performing *Shalish* locally.⁶³
- **Bachte Sekha (BS)** - The non-governmental organization Bachte Sekha was founded in 1982. It operates in the Bangladeshi districts of Jessore and Khulna and employs a variant of traditional *Shalish* that places a strong focus on empowering women throughout the *Shalish* process, according to the organization. To do this, Bachte Sekha established an 11-member village mediation committee, with seven of the members appointed being women⁶⁴. The legitimacy of the mediation process Because of this, the MLAA and Bachte Sekha both question the validity of the village committee that was constituted to facilitate

mediation.

FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

With reference to Challenges⁶⁵:

Regardless of whether the mediation process is managed by a legal aid officer, a pleader, or mediators from the panel, the court may set the procedure to be followed, and the panel may specify the protocol to be followed. However, there are no well-defined norms, regulations, or systems in place at the present time. It is provided in Section 89A (7) which stipulates that in the event that the mediation procedure fails the action must be reopened from the point at which it was prior to the referral for mediation being made⁶⁶. In fact, the defaulting party refuses to negotiate and withdraws from mediation without providing a genuine explanation, leaving the mediator with no alternative except to transfer the matter to the relevant legal system. However, there is no provision in the agreement that imposes a sanction or penalty on the party that purposefully withdraws from mediation, despite the fact that this strategy extends the time frame for the case. The limitation of jurisdiction in village court is the most major impediment to the adoption of alternative conflict resolution methods in rural areas. Mediation may be used to resolve land disputes wherein the value of the property does not exceed Tk. 75,000. It should not have jurisdiction over all land-related problems that may emerge in any given situation.

Extant Mechanisms⁶⁷:

The village court has the authority to hear cases involving both civil and criminal matters of a financial value of up to Tk.75000. However, many individuals do not go to the local court as a first step. Even in the case of a minor disagreement, they prefer to take it to official court rather than to informal court. The propensity underlying this goal might include the desire to punish and torment the other person, as well as the fear of not receiving justice, among other things. However, the fundamental reason for this is a lack of trust in the village court. Apart from that, the authority does not conduct the adjudications in village court in a proper and legal manner⁶⁸.

Effectiveness⁶⁹

Government should provide the village court with any and all sorts of logistical assistance necessary in order to attain the maximum anticipated outcome. Every village court should be required to have a separate courtroom, as well as supplementary facilities such as a computer for storing information and internet connection, in order to function effectively. In order to ensure transparency and accountability, the village court should have a rigorous and systematic monitoring apparatus, which does not presently exist or is not in the proper shape or character to carry out its tasks efficiently. Since the VC lacks the authority to force the parties to consider their summons, they are usually unable to coerce them into attending court. In this scenario, the collaboration between the village court and the law enforcement agencies takes on the appearance of a much-needed official.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) To cope up with the present perspective, except with some area wherein land is flooded or any other cause, the pecuniary jurisdiction of the Village Court should be increased

as compared to the usual court proceedings considering the skyrocketing land prices. Moreover, it would require codified Law.

- (ii) As many of the village peoples especially the Chairman and members of Union Parishod lack of proper knowledge of law regarding the Alternative Dispute Resolution, monitoring system through the TNO and proper training mechanisms with supporting staffs should be increased.
- (iii) In most of the cases at the village area (Union Parishod), one can see that Parishod has not have any distinct courtroom to solve the dispute matters and there is no skilled computer operator to save the data in their computer storage with good internet access.
- (iv) Women related issues like marriage, divorce, and rape, which are usually conducted by the Chairman and members of a Union Parishad, are applying very old process. To cope with the present perspective, there is a need to reform.
- (v) The present administration, via the Ministry of Law and Justice, may embrace the idea that ADR should be mandatory for all consumer sectors. Legislation is required to do this. Workers in the ADR sector ought to be trained.
- (vi) Community mediation supported by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may be a useful tool in keeping up with the dynamism of society.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it's apparent that the existing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms are not sufficient to provide proper justice in the society especially in the rural area. There are lot of challenges in the existing system for monitoring properly. For such reason, a codified law is required to serve the utility of ADR mechanisms for reducing the undue burden of cases in our court system. Usually, in rural area one can see that the common people want to get easy, quick and inexpensive justice through the respective village headmen or leaders or such people who are generally involved in solving the dispute matters, but they are not concerned or adept in the legal knowledge. The government should be positive by taking proper steps to codify a law such as Village Compromise Court Model⁷⁰ and monitoring this system to ensure justice.

ENDNOTES

(Endnotes)

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RISING INDIA, CHANGING ALLIANCES: A LOOK AT NEW FOREIGN TRADE POLICY

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ABSTRACT

The rise of India as a global economic and geopolitical powerhouse in the 21st century has significantly altered the dynamics of international relations. This paper delves into the evolving landscape of Indian foreign policy and its impact on changing alliances in the contemporary world. It explores the key factors and drivers behind India's ascent on the global stage and how its foreign policy priorities have shifted in response to these changes. The paper begins by tracing India's historical foreign policy trajectory and the ideological underpinnings that have shaped its approach to international affairs. It then examines the economic transformation of India and its role as a major player in the global market, highlighting the intersections of economic interests and foreign policy choices. The Foreign Trade Policy(2023) has been thoroughly examined. The paper also delves into India's regional and global diplomatic engagements, emphasizing its commitment to non-alignment and its evolving role as a major player in international politics. The paper concludes by assessing the prospects and potential future directions of India's foreign policy in a rapidly changing world.

Keywords: Alliances, economic transformation, foreign policy, geopolitics, global governance, multilateral organizations, rising India, strategic partnerships.

INTRODUCTION

India's foreign policy is a dynamic and multifaceted aspect of its national governance. Shaped by a combination of historical, geographical, cultural, and geopolitical factors, India's foreign policy has evolved significantly since gaining independence in 1947. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of India's foreign policy, examining its key principles, priorities, challenges, and recent developments.

Historical Context

India's foreign policy has deep historical roots, with ancient trade networks and cultural

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exchanges connecting it to distant lands. However, its modern foreign policy journey began with its emergence from British colonial rule in 1947. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, played a pivotal role in shaping the country's foreign policy by advocating for the principles of non-alignment, decolonization, and peaceful coexistence. India's foreign policy is a complex and dynamic framework that guides the nation's interactions with the rest of the world. It is based on several key principles and has evolved significantly since India gained independence in 1947. In this paper, we will explore the key elements of India's foreign policy, its historical development, and its current priorities.

India's foreign policy has undergone significant shifts over the years. In the early years after independence, India pursued a policy of non-alignment, which meant that it did not align with either the Western bloc led by the United States or the Eastern bloc led by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Non-alignment was a reflection of India's commitment to independence, sovereignty, and its desire to maintain friendly relations with all nations.

Panchsheel Principles

One of the defining moments in India's foreign policy history was the Panchsheel Agreement signed with China on April 29, 1954. These five principles of peaceful coexistence emphasized mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, the Sino-Indian War of 1962 significantly strained relations between the two countries.

Post-Cold War Era

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s brought about a significant shift in India's foreign policy. India began to liberalize its economy, and its foreign policy also underwent liberalization. The country began to actively engage with the global community and sought to strengthen its economic and strategic ties with countries worldwide.

Economic Diplomacy

Economic diplomacy has become a cornerstone of India's foreign policy. The country seeks foreign direct investment, promotes trade, and actively engages in regional and international economic forums. India is a member of organizations such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and G20, and it actively participates in trade negotiations such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Strategic Partnerships

India has developed strategic partnerships with key countries, such as the United States, Russia, and Israel. These partnerships include defence cooperation, technology transfer, and joint ventures in various sectors. The U.S.-India relationship has seen significant growth in recent years, with both countries cooperating on defence, counterterrorism, and economic issues.

Regional Focus

India places significant importance on its relationships with neighboring countries. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) are regional organizations

through which India aims to promote regional stability and economic cooperation. However, India's relationship with Pakistan has been marked by ongoing tensions and conflicts, particularly in the region of Kashmir.

Foreign Aid and Global Leadership

India has also expanded its foreign aid programs and peacekeeping efforts under the United Nations. It has played a prominent role in issues such as climate change, global health, and counterterrorism. India's foreign policy seeks to position the country as a global leader that contributes positively to global challenges.

Challenges and Future Directions

India's foreign policy faces several challenges, including managing its complex relationship with China, addressing border issues with Pakistan, and navigating the changing global power dynamics. As the world continues to evolve, India is likely to continue adapting its foreign policy to secure its interests and maintain its commitment to a multipolar world order.

After the end of the Second World War, colonies started attaining independence building nations that were either devastated by the war or the years of plunder carried out by the colonial rulers. Amongst all these newly independent nations, some chose the path of constitutional democracy, others were dictatorial or military regimes and some took time to find some sort of stability in governance. India, one of the largest colonies to gain independence, though had to experience civil disturbance and death due to the partition of the Indian sub-continent in 1947, as planned out by its colonial rulers, established one of the most stable democracies built on a constitution that has been safeguarding the rights of its people for the last 75 years and built an independent foreign policy. Looking at the then world order, the primary objectives of Indian foreign policy included safeguarding national security, promoting economic development and its national interests, and projecting India's influence on global issues. Over these 75 years since independence, India has shown significant dynamism in its foreign policy decisions, maintaining its strategic autonomy.

The first phase was from the year 1946 till 1962 which was an era of optimistic non-alignment, where India resisted dilution of its sovereignty, focused on rebuilding its economy, and guided nations in Asia and Africa for a more equitable world order. The second phase from 1962 till 1971 was a decade of realism and recovery, especially from the two wars in 1962 and 1965. India made pragmatic choices on security and political challenges despite a paucity of resources. The third phase was from 1971 till 1991, a period which witnessed greater Indian regional assertion with the creation of Bangladesh. During this period, the emergence of US-China-Pak axis seriously threatened India's prospects and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the economic crisis of 1991 compelled a re-examination of the fundamentals of both its internal and foreign policies.

The fourth phase was from 1991 till 1999, which was the period of India's focus celebrating 50 years of Indian foreign policy and on safeguarding its strategic autonomy. After the collapse of the USSR, India opened up its economy to the world which got reflected in its new diplomatic goals and strategies. During this period, India acquired nuclear weapons and also

fended off Pakistan's military adventurism. The fifth phase was from 2000 till 2013, where India gradually acquired the attributes of a balancing power. During this phase, it was able to forge the nuclear deal with the US, improve relations with the West, strengthen its ties with Russia as well as have a common understanding with China with regard to trade and climate change. The present phase is from 2014 till present which wherein India is engaged in dynamic all-round diplomacy. With a fast-growing China and an unsure US, a global economy that was recovering from the 2008 financial crisis and the fast-growing multi-polar nature of the world, India recognized that it was now entering into a world of issue-based arrangements. Within this phase, India has turned into one of the fastest growing economies of the world, which have expanded India's capacities significantly as a development partner as also responsibilities to contribute to meeting regional and global challenges. India, the world's largest democracy, is poised to become a political and economic pole in an increasingly multipolar world. As a beacon of stability and development, India has held an independent world view.

Key Principles of India's Foreign Policy

1. **Non-Alignment:** Non-alignment remains a cornerstone of India's foreign policy. It involves not aligning with any major power bloc, such as during the Cold War when India maintained a policy of non-alignment between the United States and the Soviet Union. This principle continues to guide India's stance in global politics.
2. **Sovereignty and Independence:** India emphasizes its sovereignty and independence in foreign policy matters, asserting the right to make decisions that serve its national interests without external interference.
3. **Regional Priorities:** India places significant emphasis on its immediate neighbourhood. The "Neighbourhood First" policy seeks to foster peaceful relations with neighbouring countries and enhance regional cooperation.
4. **Economic Diplomacy:** India's foreign policy has increasingly incorporated economic diplomacy, with a focus on trade and investment agreements. The "Act East" policy, for instance, seeks to deepen economic ties with Southeast Asian nations.
5. **Soft Power:** India utilizes its rich cultural heritage, including yoga, Bollywood, and traditional medicine, as tools of soft power to enhance its global image.
6. **Multilateralism:** India actively engages in international organizations such as the United Nations and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) to address global issues, including climate change, terrorism, and economic development.

Key Priorities and Challenges:

1. **China:** The India-China relationship is complex, marked by economic cooperation and territorial disputes. Managing this relationship remains a key challenge for Indian foreign policy.
2. **Pakistan:** India's relations with Pakistan have been fraught with tension and conflict, especially concerning the disputes in Pak-occupied Kashmir. Terrorism emanating from Pakistan continues to be a significant concern.

3. **Terrorism:** India is a victim of terrorism, with a long history of dealing with cross-border terrorism. Countering terrorism remains a priority, and India seeks international cooperation in this regard.
4. **Economic Engagement:** As India aspires to become a global economic powerhouse, expanding trade relations, attracting foreign investment, and ensuring economic growth are crucial objectives.
5. **Geopolitical Balancing:** In a changing global order, India seeks to balance its relations with major powers like the United States and Russia while maintaining its non-aligned stance.

Recent Developments

1. **Indo-U.S. Relations:** India-U.S. relations have improved significantly over the years, marked by the signing of various strategic agreements and cooperation in defence, technology, and trade.
2. **Indo-Pacific Strategy:** India's "Act East" policy is closely aligned with the Indo-Pacific strategy, aimed at promoting peace, stability, and economic development in the Indo-Pacific region.
3. **Regional Initiatives:** India has taken steps to strengthen ties with regional groupings such as BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
4. **COVID-19 Pandemic:** India's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the distribution of vaccines to neighboring countries, has enhanced its global standing.

India's Foreign Trade Policy 2023 mentions that it is dynamic and has been kept open-ended to accommodate the emerging needs of the time. The policy had been under discussion for a long time and has been formulated after multiple stakeholder consultations. India's overall exports, including services and merchandise exports, has already crossed US\$ 750 billion and is expected to cross US\$ 760 billion this year.

The government emphasized the remarkable achievement in the overall export figure of crossing US\$ 760 billion in these challenging times across the world and how this has been the result of enthusiasm and encouragement pumped in by the Prime Minister. The government intends that every opportunity for export must be captured and utilised effectively. The key approach to the policy is based on these 4 pillars: (i) Incentive to Remission, (ii) Export promotion through collaboration - Exporters, States, Districts, Indian Missions, (iii) Ease of doing business, reduction in transaction cost and e-initiatives and (iv) Emerging Areas – E-Commerce Developing Districts as Export Hubs and streamlining SCOMET policy.

Foreign Trade Policy (2023) is a policy document which is based on continuity of time-tested schemes facilitating exports as well as a document which is nimble and responsive to the requirements of trade. It is based on principles of 'trust' and 'partnership' with exporters. In the FTP 2015-20, changes were done after the initial release even without announcement of a new FTP responding dynamically to the emerging situations. Hereafter, the revisions of the FTP would be done as and when required. Incorporating feedback from Trade and Industry

would also be continuous to streamline processes and update FTP, from time to time.

The FTP 2023 aims at process re-engineering and automation to facilitate ease of doing business for exporters. It also focuses on emerging areas like dual use high end technology items under SCOMET, facilitating e-commerce export, collaborating with states and districts for export promotion. The new FTP has introduced a one-time Amnesty Scheme for exporters to close the old pending authorizations and start afresh. The FTP 2023 encourages recognition of new towns through “Towns of Export Excellence Scheme” and exporters through “Status Holder Scheme”. The FTP 2023 is facilitating exports by streamlining the popular Advance Authorization and EPCG schemes, and enabling me chanting trade from India.

Process Re-Engineering and Automation

Greater faith is being reposed on exporters through automated IT systems with risk management system for various approvals in the new FTP. The policy emphasizes export promotion and development, moving away from an incentive regime to a regime which is facilitating, based on technology interface and principles of collaboration. Considering the effectiveness of some of the ongoing schemes like Advance Authorisation, EPCG etc. under FTP 2015-20, these would be continued along with substantial process re-engineering and technology enablement for facilitating the exporters. FTP 2023 codifies implementation mechanisms in a paperless, online environment, building on earlier ‘*ease of doing business*’ initiatives. Reduction in fee structures and IT-based schemes will make it easier for MSMEs and others to access export benefits.

Duty exemption schemes for export production will now be implemented through Regional Offices in a rule-based IT system environment, eliminating the need for manual interface. During the FY23-24, all processes under the Advance and EPCG Schemes, including issue, re-validation, and EO extension, will be covered in a phased manner. Cases identified under risk management framework will be scrutinized manually, while majority of the applicants are expected to be covered under the ‘automatic’ route initially.

Towns of Export Excellence

Four new towns, namely Faridabad, Mirzapur, Moradabad, and Varanasi, have been designated as Towns of Export Excellence (TEE) in addition to the existing 39 towns. The TEEs will have priority access to export promotion funds under the MAI scheme and will be able to avail Common Service Provider (CSP) benefits for export fulfilment under the EPCG Scheme. This addition is expected to boost the exports of handlooms, handicrafts, and carpets.

Recognition of Exporters

Exporter firms recognized with ‘status’ based on export performance will now be partners in capacity-building initiatives on a best-endeavour basis. Like the ‘each one teaches one’ initiative, 2-star and above status holders would be encouraged to provide trade-related training based on a model curriculum to interested individuals. This will help India build a skilled manpower pool capable of servicing a \$5 trillion economy before 2030. Status recognition norms have been re-calibrated to enable more exporting firms to achieve 4 and 5-star ratings, leading to better branding opportunities in export markets.

Promoting Export from the Districts

The FTP aims at building partnerships with State governments and taking forward the Districts as Export Hubs (DEH) initiative to promote exports at the district level and accelerate the development of grassroots trade ecosystem. Efforts to identify export worthy products & services and resolve concerns at the district level will be made through an institutional mechanism – State Export Promotion Committee and District Export Promotion Committee at the State and District level, respectively. District specific export action plans to be prepared for each district outlining the district specific strategy to promote export of identified products and services.

Streamlining SCOMET Policy

India is placing more emphasis on the “export control” regime as its integration with export control regime countries strengthens. There is a wider outreach and understanding of SCOMET (Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies) among stakeholders, and the policy regime is being made more robust to implement international treaties and agreements entered into by India. A robust export control system in India would provide access of dual-use high end goods and technologies to Indian exporters while facilitating exports of controlled items/technologies under SCOMET from India.

Facilitating E-Commerce Exports

E-commerce exports are a promising category that requires distinct policy interventions from traditional offline trade. Various estimates suggest e-commerce export potential in the range of \$200 to \$300 billion by 2030. FTP 2023 outlines the intent and roadmap for establishing e-commerce hubs and related elements such as payment reconciliation, book-keeping, returns policy, and export entitlements. As a starting point, the consignment wise cap on E-Commerce exports through courier has been raised from Rs. 5 Lakh to Rs. 10 Lakh in the FTP 2023. Depending on the feedback of exporters, this cap will be further revised or eventually removed. Integration of Courier and Postal exports with ICEGATE will enable exporters to claim benefits under FTP. The comprehensive e-commerce policy addressing the export/import ecosystem would be elaborated soon, based on the recommendations of the working committee on e-commerce exports and inter-ministerial deliberations. Extensive outreach and training activities will be taken up to build capacity of artisans, weavers, garment manufacturers, gems and jewellery designers to on-board them on E-Commerce platforms and facilitate higher exports.

Facilitation under Export Promotion of Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme

The EPCG Scheme, which allows import of capital goods at zero customs duty for export production, is being further rationalized. Some key changes being added are:

- Prime Minister Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Parks (PM MITRA) scheme has been added as an additional scheme eligible to claim benefits under CSP (Common Service Provider) Scheme of Export Promotion capital Goods Scheme(EPCG).
- Dairy sector to be exempted from maintaining average export obligation to support dairy sector to upgrade the technology.

- Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) of all types, Vertical Farming equipment, Wastewater Treatment and Recycling, Rainwater harvesting system and Rainwater Filters, and Green Hydrogen are added to Green Technology products – will now be eligible for reduced export obligation requirement under EPCG Scheme.

Facilitation under Advance Authorization Scheme

Advance authorisation Scheme accessed by DTA units provides duty-free import of raw materials for manufacturing export items and is placed at a similar footing to EOU and SEZ Scheme. However, the DTA unit has the flexibility to work both for domestic as well as export production. Based on interactions with industry and Export Promotion councils, certain facilitation provisions have been added in the present FTP such as:

- Special Advance Authorisation Scheme extended to export of Apparel and Clothing sector under para 4.07 of HBP on self-declaration basis to facilitate prompt execution of export orders. Norms would be fixed within fixed timeframe.
- Benefits of Self-Ratification Scheme for fixation of Input-Output Norms extended to 2 star and above status holders in addition to Authorised Economic Operators at present.

Merchandise Trade

To develop India into a merchandise trade hub, the FTP 2023 has introduced provisions for merchandise trade. Merchandise trade of restricted and prohibited items under export policy would now be possible. Merchandise trade involves shipment of goods from one foreign country to another foreign country without touching Indian ports, involving an Indian intermediary. This will be subject to compliance with RBI guidelines and won't be applicable for goods/items classified in the CITES and SCOMET list. In course of time, this will allow Indian entrepreneurs to convert certain places like GIFT city etc. into major Merchandise hubs as seen in places like Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Amnesty Scheme

Finally, the government is strongly committed to reducing litigation and fostering trust-based relationships to help alleviate the issues faced by exporters. In line with “*Vivaad se Vishwaas*” initiative, which sought to settle tax disputes amicably, the government is introducing a special one-time Amnesty Scheme under the FTP 2023 to address default on Export Obligations. This scheme is intended to provide relief to exporters who have been unable to meet their obligations under EPCG and Advance Authorizations, and who are burdened by high duty and interest costs associated with pending cases. All pending cases of the default in meeting Export Obligation (EO) of authorizations mentioned can be regularized on payment of all customs duties that were exempted in proportion to unfulfilled Export Obligation. The interest payable is capped at 100% of these exempted duties under this scheme. However, no interest is payable on the portion of Additional Customs Duty and Special Additional Customs Duty and this is likely to provide relief to exporters as interest burden will come down substantially. It is hoped that this amnesty will give these exporters a fresh start and an opportunity to come into compliance.

Marking its 75th year of Independence, India, the world's largest democracy, is poised to become a political and economic pole. As a beacon of stability and development, India

has held an independent world view and maintained its strategic autonomy in foreign policy making since independence. In these 75 years, India has consistently contributed, in no small measure, to shaping the international order. It has been a force for good and a voice of reason. Celebration of ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’, reflects on the evolution of Indian foreign policy in the backdrop of the evolving global geo-political and geo-economics environment. Guided by traditional values and principles, India participates actively in various platforms, be it multilateral or bilateral structures, and is a voice of the developing and the vulnerable. India continues to shape the global discourse on critical issues like global warming, climate change, sustainable development, global trade, counterterrorism, pluralistic and inclusive global order that is based on the foundation of normative architecture. In recent years, as a first, India has sought to sponsor global initiatives like 135-member International Solar Alliance, Coalition of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Green Grids, etc. While the present-day world is faced with strife and conflicts, India as a rising power and major economy remains confident in building dynamic and constructive relations with all nations and global players, alike.

The foreign policy dynamics of a rising India are marked by a complex interplay of factors. As India continues to emerge as a significant global player, its foreign policy choices are evolving to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. This analysis has highlighted several key points:

1. **Balancing Act:** India’s foreign policy is characterized by a delicate balancing act between traditional alliances and new partnerships. While maintaining strong ties with historical allies like the United States and Russia, India is also actively pursuing closer relationships with nations in its immediate neighbourhood and beyond, such as Japan and Australia.
2. **Economic Diplomacy:** Economic considerations are playing an increasingly central role in India’s foreign policy. Trade and investment partnerships with various countries are driving many of India’s diplomatic initiatives. These economic ties are not only beneficial for India’s development but also contribute to its strategic leverage on the global stage.
3. **Regional Focus:** India’s “Act East” and “Neighbourhood First” policies are indicative of its emphasis on regional cooperation and stability. By strengthening ties with its neighbouring countries, India aims to foster a peaceful and prosperous South Asian region, which is vital for its own growth and stability.
4. **Multilateral Engagement:** India’s commitment to multilateral forums like the United Nations and BRICS reflects its aspirations for a greater global role. It seeks to reform these institutions to better represent the interests of emerging economies and make them more effective in addressing contemporary challenges.
5. **Security Concerns:** Security issues, including border disputes and counterterrorism efforts, continue to be integral to India’s foreign policy. Managing these concerns with neighbouring countries and global partners is essential for India’s national security and stability.
6. **Soft Power:** India’s cultural influence, through Bollywood, yoga, and its diaspora, also plays a role in shaping its foreign policy. Soft power has been leveraged to enhance India’s image and build relationships with other nations.

Considering these dynamics, India's foreign policy landscape is continually evolving. The nation's rise on the global stage brings both opportunities and challenges, requiring a pragmatic and adaptable approach. India's leaders must remain agile in navigating the shifting sands of international relations, always mindful of their country's strategic interests and values.

As the world watches the trajectory of rising India and its changing alliances, it is clear that the nation's foreign policy choices will have a profound impact not only on its own future but on the broader global order. In a world marked by uncertainty and complexity, India's foreign policy is a compelling case study of a rising power's quest for its place in the sun.

CONCLUSION

India's foreign policy in a dynamic and adaptive framework has evolved with the changing global landscape. Its commitment to non-alignment, regional engagement, economic diplomacy, and soft power has allowed India to carve a unique space in international politics. Challenges such as border disputes and regional conflicts persist, but India's foreign policy continues to adapt to address these issues while pursuing its vision of becoming a global leader. India's foreign policy has come a long way since independence. It has evolved from non-alignment to active global engagement with an emphasis on economic diplomacy, strategic partnerships, and regional cooperation. As the world undergoes further transformations, India's foreign policy will continue to adapt to meet the nation's evolving needs and global responsibilities. India's foreign policy is a complex and dynamic field that plays a crucial role in shaping the country's relationships with other nations and its standing on the global stage. Over the years, India has pursued a policy of non-alignment, seeking to balance its relationships with various global powers while promoting its own national interests. However, in recent times, there has been a noticeable shift towards a more assertive and pragmatic foreign policy, as India aims to secure its place as a major global player.

The country's foreign policy objectives encompass economic growth, national security, diplomatic influence, and regional stability. As India continues to grow economically and militarily, its foreign policy will evolve to reflect these changing realities. It will be imperative for Indian policymakers to strike a delicate balance between building stronger ties with traditional allies and forging new partnerships to ensure long-term security and prosperity. In the coming years, India must remain adaptable and open to diplomatic dialogue, especially in regions with historical conflicts such as South Asia. Furthermore, enhancing soft power through cultural diplomacy and strengthening international institutions will be crucial for India's role in shaping global governance. Overall, India's foreign policy landscape is evolving, and it will be fascinating to observe how it adapts to the rapidly changing global order. With its rich history, diverse culture, and growing influence, India is poised to be a key player in shaping the course of international relations in the 21st century.

CYANOTIC METHEMOGLOBINEMIA CAUSING SELECTED TOXICANTS: A BRIEF ACCOUNT

*Sundersingh Samuel**

ABSTRACT

Disorders of haemoglobin leading to cyanosis include carboxyhaemoglobinemia, sulfhaemoglobinemia and methemoglobinemia. Methemoglobinemia occurs when iron molecule in haemoglobin is oxidized from the ferrous to ferric state. Haemoglobin can no longer bind oxygen in oxidized state, resulting in decreased oxygen availability in tissue. Cyanosis unresponsive to oxygen, is the hallmark of methemoglobinemia. Agents producing methemoglobinemia have been discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Haemoglobin, methemoglobinemia, toxicity

INTRODUCTION

Haemoglobin, in which the iron molecule is oxidized from the normal ferrous state (Fe^{2+}) to the ferric state (Fe^{3+}) is called methemoglobin. Methemoglobinemia is the clinical condition in which more than 2% of haemoglobin (the normal amount) has been oxidized.

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

- A methemoglobin molecule cannot carry oxygen. Methemoglobin also increases the affinity of normal haemoglobin for oxygen, which results in reduced ability of normal haemoglobin to release oxygen. This further reduces oxygen delivery to the tissues.
- Normally, the NADH methemoglobin reductase reduces methemoglobin back to haemoglobin; however, this pathway is overwhelmed, when large amounts of methemoglobin are produced. NADPH methemoglobin reductase, another enzyme, also reduces a small amount of methemoglobin under normal conditions; but this enzyme system can only be accelerated when supplied with an exogenous electron carrier, such as methylene blue.
- Elevated methemoglobin levels can be produced by oxidising agents, deficiency of NADH or NADPH methemoglobin reductase, and by oxidative stress in persons with glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency.

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EPIDEMIOLOGY

Toxic effects are usually mild to moderate. In the elderly population, there is a higher incidence of comorbid diseases that may increase methemoglobin toxicity. Death occurs in untreated cases wherein methemoglobin levels are greater than 70%. Most causes are secondary to adverse medication reaction, recreational abuse of amyl nitrites (poppers) or therapeutic misadventure.

RISK FACTORS

Deficiencies in NADPH or NADH methemoglobin reductase, G6PD deficiency or the heterozygous form of haemoglobin M, may lead to methemoglobinemia. Foetal haemoglobin is oxidized to methemoglobin more easily than normal haemoglobin; patients with underlying pulmonary disease, heart disease or anaemia develop symptoms at lower methemoglobin levels.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Symptoms are related to decreased oxygen delivery to tissues and often correlate with methemoglobin concentration. Cyanosis that is unresponsive to oxygen therapy and of non-cardiac and non-pulmonary aetiologies, is suggestive of methemoglobinemia.

Vital signs: Tachycardia and tachypnea are common. Hypotension may develop in severe methemoglobinemia.

Dermatologic: When methemoglobin concentrations exceed 1.5%, cyanosis occurs. Cyanosis is typically more brown than blue in colour.

Cardiovascular: In severe cases, dysrhythmias may occur. Cardiac arrest and myocardial infarction have been reported. Hypotension may be due to nitrates and related compounds that are vasodilators, in addition to causes of methemoglobinemia.

Pulmonary: Shortness of breath and acute respiratory arrest have been reported.

Hematologic: Blood may have a chocolate brown colour. Hemolysis is associated with methemoglobin.

Neurologic: At high methemoglobin concentrations, lethargy, confusion, syncope, seizures and coma may develop.

LABORATORY TESTS

- Methemoglobin level should be determined.

Normal methemoglobin level is less than 2%. With 15% to 20% methemoglobin, cyanosis is present, and patient is asymptomatic. With 20% to 45% methemoglobin; anxiety, headache, dizziness, fatigue, syncope, & dyspnoea occur. With 45 to 55% methemoglobin; CNS depression occurs. With 55% to 75% methemoglobin; coma, seizures, dysrhythmias, and shock occur. With more than 70% methemoglobin, death may occur, if the condition is untreated.

- Blood colour: blood with methemoglobinemia has a characteristic chocolate brown colour.

TREATMENT

Supportive care with appropriate airway management is important. Specific treatment should be initiated while supportive care continues. In severe cases, methylene blue should be administered. Many patients with mild methemoglobinemia require only humidified oxygen and removal of the oxidizing agent.

Decontamination: Gastric lavage should be performed in paediatric or adult patients for large ingestion presenting within first hour of ingestion or if serious effects are present. One dose of activated charcoal (1-2g/kg) should be administered if there is a substantial ingestion.

Antidotes: Specific antidote for methemoglobinemia is methylene blue.

METHYLENE BLUE

Indications: Methemoglobin level above 20% to 25% and increasing even if the patient is asymptomatic. Symptomatic patient with any elevation of methemoglobin level. Patient with cyanosis that does not correct with 100% oxygen administration. Any evidence of cardiac or CNS hypoxia.

Contraindications: Allergy to methylene blue. Known G6PD deficiency or NADPH methemoglobin reductase deficiency.

Method of Administration: Dose is 1 to 2 mg/kg of 1% solution intravenously over 5 minutes; clinical improvement should be apparent shortly there.

Potential Adverse effects: Hemolysis in patients with G6PD deficiency. Paradoxical worsening of methemoglobinemia with extremely large doses of methylene blue (cumulative dose greater than 7 mg/kg).

Ascorbic Acid: It works very slowly and is not recommended; it is used in cases of NADH deficiency.

ADJUNCTIVE TREATMENT

For life threatening methemoglobinemia refractory to methylene blue therapy or in patient with severe G6PD deficiency, exchange transfusion and hyperbaric oxygen are rarely used.

Use atropine to correct hypotension related to bradycardia. Patient should receive 10 to 20 ml/kg 0.9% saline. Vasopressor may be added if needed.

SELECTED TOXICANTS CAUSING METHEMOGLOBINEMIA

BROMATES¹

Introduction

Bromate-containing permanent wave neutralizers was ingested in suicide attempt by a professional hairdresser. Commercial bakeries use bromate salts to improve bread texture, and for some explosives, bromates are the components of the fusing material. In one reported epidemic of bromate poisoning, bromate-contaminated sugar was the cause of poisoning.

Toxic dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

Serious poisoning is caused by the acute ingestion of 200-500 mg of potassium bromate per kilogram. Ingestion of 2-4 oz of 2% potassium bromate solution cause serious toxicity in children.

The bromate ion is toxic to the cochlea, causing irreversible hearing loss, and also is nephrotoxic. In the stomach, bromates are converted to hydrobromic acid, causing gastritis. Bromates are strong oxidising agents which oxidizes haemoglobin to methemoglobin.

Clinical presentation

Within 2 hours of ingestion, victims develop GI symptoms, including vomiting, diarrhoea, and epigastric pain, which is accompanied by restlessness, lethargy, coma and convulsions. An asymptomatic phase of a few hours may follow before renal failure develops. Within 1-2 days of ingestion, anuria is apparent; Tinnitus and irreversible sensorineural deafness occur between 4 and 16 hours after ingestion in adults, but deafness is delayed for several days in children. Hemolysis and thrombocytopenia have been reported in some children. And methemoglobinemia has been reported.

CHLORATES ²

Introduction

Some matchstick heads contain potassium chlorate as a component, barium chlorate is used in the manufacture of fireworks and explosives. In commercial agriculture, sodium chlorate is a major ingredient in some weed killers and other chlorate salts are used in dye production. Chlorates are more likely to cause intravascular hemolysis and methemoglobinemia in comparison with bromate intoxication.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

The minimum toxic dose is estimated to range from 1g in infants to 5g in older children. The adult lethal dose is probably closer to 20-35 g.

Chlorates are potent oxidizing agents. Also these attack sulfhydryl groups, particularly in red blood cells and the kidneys. Chlorates cause intravascular hemolysis as well as methemoglobin formation. Renal failure is caused by a combination of direct cellular toxicity and hemolysis.

Clinical presentation

Within a few minutes to hours after ingestion, abdominal pain, vomiting, and diarrhoea may occur. Coagulopathy and hepatic injury have been reported. Methemoglobinemia is common. Over 1-2 days after ingestion, massive hemolysis, hemoglobinuria and acute tubular necrosis may occur.

DAPSONE ³

Introduction

Dapsone is an antibiotic used for treatment of malaria, leprosy, and *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia. The immune-suppressant and anti-inflammatory effects of dapsone make it

valuable for the treatment of some rheumatologic and rare dermatologic disorders.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

Chronic daily dosing of 100 mg can cause methemoglobin levels of 5-12 %. Persons with glucose 6 phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency, congenital hemoglobin abnormalities or underlying hypoxemia may experience greater toxicity at lower doses. Death has occurred with overdoses of 1.4 g and greater.

The toxic effects are caused by oxidized cytochrome P-450(CYP) dapson metabolites, which can cause methemoglobinemia, sulfhemoglobinemia, and Heinz body hemolytic anaemia, all of which decrease the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.

Clinical presentation

Manifestations of acute dapson intoxication include vomiting, cyanosis, tachypnea, tachycardia, altered or depressed mental states, and seizures. Methemoglobinemia causes cyanosis and dyspnea. When the methemoglobin level is greater than 15-20%, drawn blood may appear chocolate- brown. Because of the long half-life of dapson and its metabolites, methemoglobinemia may persist for several days. Hemolysis may be delayed at the onset, 2-3 days after acute overdose.

DINITROPHENOL ⁴

Introduction

Dinitrophenols have been used as fungicides, insecticides, herbicides, and chemical intermediaries and are used in some explosives, dyes, and photographic chemicals.

Toxic dosage & Mechanism of toxicity

Ingestion of 1-3g of dinitrophenol is considered lethal.

Dinitrophenols uncouple oxidative phosphorylation in the mitochondria. Substrates are metabolized, but the energy produced is dissipated as heat instead of producing adenosine triphosphate (ATP). There is an increase in the basal metabolic rate, placing increased demands on the cardiorespiratory system. Dinitrophenols oxidize haemoglobin to methemoglobin.

Clinical Presentation

Acute exposure causes irritation of the skin, eyes, and upper respiratory tract. Systemic absorption may cause headache, vomiting, weakness and lethargy. With severe or fatal poisonings, profound sweating, hyperthermia, tachycardia, tachypnea, convulsions, and coma have been reported. Cardiovascular collapse or hyperthermia is usually the cause of death. Dinitrophenol may also induce methemoglobinemia, liver and kidney failure.

Chronic exposure may present in a similar manner and in addition may cause weight loss, GI disturbances, weakness, flu-like symptoms, fevers and night sweats, contact dermatitis, and aplastic anaemia.

LIDOCAINE ⁵

Introduction

The class 1B antidysrhythmic agents include lidocaine, tocainide, xylocaine, and mexiletine. Lidocaine HCl (viscous gel (2%- 4% lidocaine)) is used as a topical anaesthetic.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

Toxicity has occurred after ingestion of 5-10 mg/kg of lidocaine.

Antidysrhythmic class1B agents depress phase IV depolarization of the cardiac action potential by producing a blockade of the fast inward sodium channel. This slows propagation of impulse conduction through myocardial tissue. Toxicity may develop with therapeutic doses.

Clinical Presentation

Restlessness is the first sign of toxicity. CNS effects typically develop before dysrhythmia. Toxicity due to intravenous lidocaine is immediate. Bradycardia and hypotension occur after serious ingestion. Miosis and tinnitus occur with lidocaine at high doses. Cardiovascular effects range from nodal bradycardia to third-degree atrioventricular (AV) block and asystole occurs. Apnoea and respiratory depression may occur in a serious overdose. Methemoglobinemia hematologic effect in lidocaine toxicity. Neurologic effects include restlessness, confusion, irritability, dizziness, seizure and coma.

METOCLOPRAMIDE ⁶

Introduction

Metoclopramide is a synthetic chemical. Metoclopramide reduces the inhibitory effect of dopamine in gut motility, and in about 10-30% of patients, may induce extrapyramidal signs (ranging from a Parkinson-like syndrome to tremors and agitation). It is an antiemetic.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

Nine children aged one month to nine years who received doses of 5 to 50 mg of metoclopramide were hospitalized; and they recovered. No lethal dose of metoclopramide has been reported.

When administered in high doses, these (metoclopramide) substituted benzamide prokinetic agents block 5-hydroxytryptamine (5-HT₃) receptors in the gastrointestinal motor system. In the GI tract, metoclopramide enhances acetylcholine release and sensitizes muscarinic receptors. It stimulates gastric emptying. Also, metoclopramide antagonizes the inhibitory effect of dopamine receptors located in the smooth muscle of the GI tract. Within CNS, it also exerts an antidopaminergic effect, resulting in extrapyramidal adverse effects.

Clinical presentation

In Overdose: Overdose in young children, produce intermittent opisthotonos, increased muscle tone in the limbs, facial grimacing, oculogyric crisis, agitation, strabismus, nystagmus, seizures, cyanosis of the extremities, and cogwheel rigidity. Torticollis and opisthotonus are the most common extrapyramidal manifestations of overdose. Intravenous use has resulted in bradycardia and total heart block.

In Chronic use: Methemoglobinemia, extrapyramidal symptoms, dystonic reactions with sudden death after high dose IV metoclopramide have been reported.

MOTH BALLS⁷

Introduction

Mothballs are used to repel moths, and other insects, and small animals. The active ingredient in mothballs is paradichlorobenzene or naphthalene.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

Toxic dose: One naphthalene mothball can produce haemolysis in Glucose 6 phosphate Dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficient children.

Paradichlorobenzene: Methemoglobinemia and red cell haemolysis have been reported. Hepatotoxicity has been reported following chronic exposure.

Naphthalene: It is readily absorbed and can cause toxicity. Gastrointestinal distress may occur shortly after ingestion. Hemolysis and methemoglobinemia may occur 1 to 5 days after ingestion. Toxicity is usually delayed for several days as naphthalene is metabolized to a potent haemolytic agent called α -naphthol.

Clinical presentation

Acute effects: No toxicity from a single mothball. Large ingestion may result in fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhoea 24 to 48 hours later. In severe cases, lethargy and seizures develop. Signs of hemolysis include pallor, weakness, haemoglobinuria, jaundice, and cyanosis.

Chronic effects: Aplastic anaemia, hepatic necrosis, and jaundice may occur.

NITRATES AND NITRITES⁸

Introduction

Organic nitrates (eg, isosorbide dinitrate, and isosorbide mononitrate, nitroglycerin) are widely used as vasodilators for the treatment of ischemic heart disease and heart failure. Bismuth subnitrate and silver nitrate are used in antidiarrheal drugs and in topical burn medications respectively. Sodium and potassium nitrate and nitrite are used in preserving foods.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

Nitrates. The adult lethal oral dose of nitro-glycerine is 200-1200 mg. Massive doses are required to produce methemoglobinemia.

Nitrites. Ingestion of 15 ml of butyl nitrite produced 40% methemoglobinemia in an adult. Adult lethal oral dose of sodium nitrite is 1g.

Nitrates and nitrites both cause vasodilation, which can result in hypotension. Nitrates relax veins at lower doses and arteries at higher doses. Nitrites are potent oxidizing agents. Oxidation of haemoglobin by nitrites result in methemoglobinemia.

Clinical Presentation

The most common adverse effects of nitrates and nitrites are headache, skin flushing and orthostatic hypotension with reflex tachycardia. Workers or patients regularly exposed to nitrates may develop angina or myocardial infarction. Methemoglobinemia is most common

after nitrite exposure; Use of sildenafil and other selective phosphodiesterase inhibitors (tadalafil, vardenafil) can prolong and intensify the vasodilating effects of nitrates, causing severe hypotension.

PHENAZOPYRIDINE ⁹

Introduction

Phenazopyridine hydrochloride, has, in overdose, produced methemoglobinemia, hemolytic anaemia, and acute renal failure. Phenazopyridine hydrochloride is a synthetic azo dye. Phenazopyridine exerts an analgesic effect on the mucosa of the urinary tract and is used to provide symptomatic relief of pain, burning, urgency, frequency, and other discomforts resulting from the irritation of the lower urinary tract mucosa.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

As little as 50mg/kg of oral phenazopyridine has produced human toxicity and as little as 600 mg/d in adults with renal impairment has caused cyanosis.

Fatal dose: One patient ingested 2000 mg of phenazopyridine with prior renal dysfunction, developed further renal failure, and died of a pulmonary embolism.

In phenazopyridine overdose, progressive oliguric renal failure has been found to occur. This may be due to a direct toxic effect of the drug on the renal tubules. Hemolysis may follow ingestion of either phenazopyridine or aniline alone. Methemoglobinemia follows phenazopyridine oxidation of haemoglobin iron (Fe^{2+} to Fe^{3+}).

Clinical Presentation

Methemoglobinemia may occur usually with hemolytic anemia. Methemoglobinemia may follow a therapeutic dose of phenazopyridine in glucose 6 phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficient patients, and those with functional renal impairment. Non-oliguric acute renal failure usually is associated with methemoglobinemia and hemolysis. Hypersensitivity hepatitis, rhabdomyolysis and aseptic meningitis have been reported.

PHENOL AND RELATED COMPOUNDS ¹⁰

Introduction

Phenol (carbolic acid) is a potent germicidal agent. Phenol is now most commonly found in topical skin products (eg, Campho-phenique contains 4.7% phenol) and is also used cosmetically as a skin-peeling agent. Creosote, creosol, cresol, cresylic acid, hydroquinone, eugenol, and phenylphenol, are the other phenolic compounds.

Toxic Dosage & Mechanism of Toxicity

The minimum toxic and lethal doses have not been well established. Phenol is well absorbed via ingestion, inhalation and skin application.

- A. **Inhalation:** The level considered immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) is 250 ppm.
- B. **Skin application:** Cardiac arrhythmias occurred after dermal application of 3 ml of an 88% phenol solution. Solutions of more than 5%, are corrosive.

C. **Ingestion:** It has been reported that as little as 50-500 mg is fatal among infants. Deaths have occurred after adult ingestions of 1-32 g of phenol.

Phenol disrupts the cell wall, denatures protein, and produces a coagulative tissue necrosis. Systemic absorption may result in cardiac arrhythmias and CNS stimulation. Dinitrophenol and hydroquinone may induce hemolysis and methemoglobinemia.

Clinical Presentation

Inhalation. Vapours of phenol may cause respiratory tract irritation and chemical pneumonia. Severe tracheobronchitis may be caused by smoking clove cigarettes (clove oil contains the phenol derivative eugenol).

Skin and eyes. Topical exposure of the skin may produce a deep white patch that turns red, after which the skin stains brown. If concentrated phenolic compounds meet eyes, irritation and severe corneal damage may occur.

Ingestion usually causes diffuse corrosive GI tract injury. Systemic absorption may cause seizures, coma, hypotension, arrhythmias and respiratory arrest.

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COST-EFFECTIVE ANALYSIS OF RUBBER PLANTATION: A STRATEGY FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN TRIPURA

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to highlight the cost-effective analysis of rubber plantation in Tripura. The result indicates that the initial capital investment on rubber comprised establishment and maintenance of rubber plantation during the gestation period (upto 6th year). Among various components of labour cost, the prime cost was that of the application of manures and fertilizers which constituted largest of the total establishment cost, followed by weeding, land preparation, digging and pit filling, cost of insecticide application, cost of planting and shading. Rubber Block Plantation for socio-economic settlement of the 'Jhumias' in Tripura has been considered a great success. An international organization like the World Bank has commended it as outstanding. The scheme has so far adopted about 3000 families along with their 20000 dependents and settled them permanently with 3251 hectares of rubber in 53 different parts of the state. The paper suggests that rubber plantation should be incorporated in policy of the government. for empowerment of scheduled tribes and a way towards afforestation.

Keywords: Economic analysis, empowerment, Income, jhumias, rubber plantation.

INTRODUCTION

Rubber plantations have been a main historical cause of tropical deforestation and are generally responsible for a range of environmental and social ills. The three largest producers, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia, together account for around 72 percent of all-natural

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rubber production. Rubber plantation development is one of the lucrative farming ventures in Kerala, and Tripura (Adikari and Sharma, 2018). Rubber latex is extracted from rubber trees. The economic life of rubber trees in plantations is around 32 years, with up to seven years being an immature phase and about 25 years of productive phase (Bhattacharya, 1992).

The people of Tripura have placed rubber plantation in their heart and made it the major source of income within 45 years of inception. It has become a popular cash crop providing a lot of employment opportunities in the rural areas (Bhattacharyya *et. al.*, 1996). The major quantity of rubber produced in the State is now transported to other States for consumption.

The proposed Rubber Park which is being set up at Bodhjungle Industrial area may increase the consumption of more rubber goods. It will also provide more employment opportunities to the people of Tripura (Alexander and Haran, 2016).

The most successful story in rubber cultivation in Tripura is the establishment of marketing set up. The wide network of rubber dealers, spread over most of the areas, ensures for the growers, the country's best farm gate price of an agriculture commodity (George *et. al.*, 1988). The increased global demand also contributes to price stability. Two other factors, which are of prime effectiveness, are regular market intervention by the Rubber Board- promoted companies and the bargaining capacity built up by the Rubber Producers' Societies (Chandy, 2006).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this paper are:

- (a) to examine the economic analysis of rubber plantation in Tripura; and
- (b) to study the implementation of rubber plantation scheme for socio-economic upliftment of scheduled tribes in Tripura.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

(a) Study area description: Tripura is a state in Northeast India. The third-smallest state in the country, it covers 10,491 km², and the seventh-least populous state with a population of 3.67 million. It is bordered by Assam and Mizoram to the east and by Bangladesh to the north, south and west. Tripura is divided into 8 districts and 23 sub-divisions. Agartala is the capital and the largest city in the state. Tripura has 19 different tribal communities with a majority Bengali population. Bengali, English and Kokborok are the state's official languages.

(b) Design and approach: This study is descriptive in design and has utilized a qualitative approach. Secondary data were used in this study. The secondary



Map: Political Map of Tripura

data are collected from various government reports, report of Rubber board, report of international agencies, research papers, published or unpublished thesis, articles etc.

- (c) **Method of analysis:** To reveal the rubber plantation in general and the socio-economic empowerment of tribals in particular, different methods of qualitative analysis comprising of descriptive analysis, content and text analysis were performed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

(a) Economic Analysis of Rubber Plantation

Tribal populations are prominent in North-east region of India. Rubber cultivation, which has already attracted large scale participation of tribals is proving to be an effective means of weaning away the 'jhumias' to settled cultivation. Considering this situation, the Rubber Board in collaboration with the Tribal Welfare Department of the Government of Tripura is implementing a series of block planting programmes in which large blocks of tribal areas are planted with rubber initially engaging beneficiaries as wage earners (Sarkar, 2011).

Rubber plantation is classified as mature plantation, and immature plantation. Rubber plantation having age upto 6th years is known as immature plantation. Initial capital investment on rubber comprised establishment and maintenance of rubber plantation during the gestation period (upto 6th year). Among various components of labour cost, the prime cost was that of the application of manures and fertilizers which constituted largest of the total establishment cost, followed by weeding, land preparation, digging and pit filling, cost of insecticide application, cost planting and cost of shading (Choudhary and Tayal, 2010).

Table 1: Summary of Cost of Establishment of One Acre of Rubber Plantation

Year	Labour cost	Material cost	Ratio of material cost to labour cost	Total cost	Percentage to total cost
I	9850.00	9700.00	0.98	19550.00	48.75
II	3400.00	2550.00	0.75	5950.00	14.84
III	2100.00	1950.00	0.93	4050.00	10.10
IV	2650.00	1400.00	0.53	4050.00	10.10
V	2100.00	1250.00	0.59	3350.00	8.35
VI	1900.00	1250.00	0.66	3150.00	7.86
Total	22000.00	18100.00	0.82	40100.00	100.00
Percentages to total cost	54.86	45.14			

Source: Yogish, S. (2020). *Economic Analysis of Rubber Plantation – A Case Study of Shivamogga District, Proceedings of the Sixth Middle East Conference on Global Business, Economics, Finance and Banking (ME17Dubai Conference), Dubai - UAE. 6-8, p.8*

Table (1) demonstrates the cost of establishment of one acre of rubber plantation. It is seen that the ratio for the six-year period was less than one, which indicates that rubber production was labour intensive. The material cost formed 45.14 percent of the total initial capital investment. Out of the total establishment cost, 48.75 per cent was incurred in the first year

and for remaining years the establishment and maintenance cost accounted for 14.84, 10.10, 10.10, 8.35 and 7.86 percent and during second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth years, respectively (Yogish, 2017). The cost of cultivation comprises both fixed and variable costs. The cost of cultivation of rubber has been worked out for small and large plantations separately.

Table 2: Cost of Cultivation of Rubber Plantation (Rs. /acre)

Particular	Small Plantations		Large Plantations	
	Amount (in Rs.)	Percentage to total cost	Amount (in Rs.)	Percentages to total cost
A. Variable costs				
Manures	1512.00	5.75	1720.00	6.26
Fertilizers	2680.00	10.19	2800.00	10.18
Plant protection chemicals	450.00	16.72	500.00	1.89
Rain guard	550.00	2.10	824.00	3.00
Processing chemical	4520.00	17.19	6110.00	22.22
Maintenance of implements	202.00	0.77	238.00	0.87
Labour costs	13280.00	50.51	12020.00	43.72
Interest on fixed cost assets	3098.00	11.78	3280.00	11.93
Total variable cost	26292.00	85.26	27492.00	84.46
B. Fixed Cost				
Authorised cost of establishment	2513.70	55.28	2582.00	51.05
Rental value of land	1815.00	39.92	1914.00	37.84
Depreciation	98.00	2.16	230.00	0.40
Land revenue	8.00	0.18	8.00	0.16
Interest on fixed assets	112.24	2.47	324.00	6.41
Total fixed cost	4546.24	14.74	5058.00	15.54
Total cost	30838.24		32550.00	

Source: Yogish, S. (2020). *Economic Analysis of Rubber Plantation – A Case Study of Shivamogga District, Proceedings of the Sixth Middle East Conference on Global Business, Economics, Finance and Banking (ME17Dubai Conference), Dubai - UAE. 6-8, p.8.* Note: The wage rate is Rs. 125 per manday and Rs. 75 per woman day.

Table (2) shows the cost of cultivation of rubber plantation. It has been found that components of variable costs, labour cost, is the prime cost constituting 50.51 per cent of the total variable cost. Ammortized cost of establishment is the major item among fixed cost, constituting 55.28 per cent of the total fixed cost. The next important cost is rental value of land, which forms 39.92 per cent of the total cost, while fixed cost accounts for 39.92 per cent of the total cost (Yogish, 2017).

Rubber smallholdings of Kerala, indicates that tapping task in a unit gets reduced with diminishing size of operational holding and thus forces the tapper to attach himself with more

than one grower. The earning of the workers in the rubber plantations are low earning compared to other comparable activities, which has led to withdrawal of skilled and experienced workers from the market (Chouhan and Bhowmik, 2017). Rubber plantations are considered to be a profitable economic investment for people from all sections of life. The opening up of the economy following economic reforms in 1991 saw the Indian rubber economy integrate with the world market. Several private initiatives occurred with an expectation to reap in as much profit as possible (Bhowmik, 2006).

(b) Implementation of Rubber Plantation Scheme

Tripura, which is India's second-largest rubber-producing state after Kerala, now has over 70,000 hectares, or nearly seven per cent of the state's land area, under rubber plantations, compared to under 700 hectares in the mid-1970s. Assam's rubber cultivation has increased three-fold to over 49,000 hectares over the past decade, while Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland have also seen increases in areas under rubber plantations in recent years. The potential of rubber plantations in Tripura being well identified by the mid-1970s saw the Rubber Board set up its regional office in 1979 at Agartala (Sreelakshmi *et. al.*, 2007). The introduction of cash subsidy as an incentive for new plantations by the Rubber Board in 1980 had seen a significant growth in new areas under rubber all over the rubber growing regions and Tripura was no exception. By 1971-72, with the commencement of tapping and processing, Tripura was on the verge of a new age of development (George *et. al.*, 2002).

Table 3: Area and Production of Natural Rubber in Tripura

District	New Planting (ha)	Immature Area (ha)	Mature Area (ha)	Total Area (ha)	Production (mt)	Productivity (Kg/ha)	Mature Area (%)	Production (%)
North	301.29	1662.91	8325.71	9988.62	9450.52	1197.00	11	10
Unakoti	199.53	702.50	3245.30	3947.80	3630.68	1188.50	4	4
Dhalai	426.63	1510.32	5042.90	6553.22	5861.98	1174.00	7	6
Khowai	303.90	246.64	4369.50	4616.14	4217.36	1200.00	5	5
West	61.12	3081.29	13580.49	16661.78	17521.29	1295.00	19	19
Sepahijala	297.08	2619.45	15699.43	18318.88	20739.12	1412.00	21	22
Gomati	318.5	1476.30	10611.06	12087.36	15893.31	1657.00	14	17
South	464.47	3359.69	13730.74	17090.43	16056.93	1185.00	19	17
Total	2372.52	14659.10	74605.13	89264.23	93371.19	1288.56	100	100

Source: Economic Review of Tripura (2021-22), Government of Tripura.

Table (3) discusses the area and production of natural rubber in Tripura. It has been found that Sepahijala has the highest percentage of mature plantations followed by the West Tripura, and South Tripura district. Sepahijala district has the highest production of natural rubber, followed by the West Tripura district. Gomati district has highest productivity of natural rubber followed by the Sepahijala, and Kowai district.

The Block Planting Scheme (BPS) was introduced by the Rubber Board in Tripura in 1992 in three different units/blocks with a total area of 113.99 ha. Under such scheme, a compact

land (block) owned by SC/ST households is identified and the plantation is raised by engaging family labour as wage earners (Pal and Dey, 2000). The Tripura Block plantation is a joint venture between the Government of Tripura and the Rubber Board. The principal objective of the project is the economic upliftment of tribal Jhumia families engaged in rubber plantation on allotted lands, through an integrated approach (Subramanian, 2000). The participation in rubber plantation would enable the farmers to shift from shifting cultivation to a more settled form of livelihood and would also promote an eco-friendly method of cultivation (Joseph *et. al.*, 2010).

The different agencies involved in production and extension of rubber in Tripura have all been increasing their area under operation for successive years (Raju, 2016). The agency wise coverage of area under rubber plantation depicts that TFDPC has the lead in the South Tripura and North Tripura district, while in the West Tripura district the private sector is the lead unit while in Dhalai district, the TRPC is the dominant agency. The success story of TFDPC and TRPC has encouraged private initiatives in rubber plantations within the state. Rubber plantations and cultivation were considered a viable means of economic development and the state government formed the Tripura Forest Development and Plantation Corporation in 1976-77 (Dey, 2011).

The TRPC is the dominant agency for rubber plantation in five subdivisions namely, Khowai, Amarpur, Kamalpur, Ambasa and Longtraï valley. On the other hand, the private sector has the maximum area in the subdivisions of Sadar, Bishalgarh, Sonamura and Udaipur. In terms of total area, however we find private sector marginally ahead of the TFDPC in the state and in terms of coverage in the subdivisions. However, there are private initiatives in all other subdivisions though the range of coverage among them varies for various economic and non-economic factors (Bhowmik, 2006). The efforts at rehabilitation of landless tribals and people from other weaker section have received thrust under the schemes sponsored by the Department of Rural Development and the Department of Tribal Welfare (Joseph, 1986). TRPC is actively engaged in raising rubber plantations for the rehabilitation of the landless tribals in fourteen subdivisions (Rubber Board, 1997).

Table 4: Tripura Rehabilitation Plantation Corporation and Its Beneficiaries

Districts/ Areas	No. of location	No. of Beneficiaries	Districts/ Areas	No. of location	No. of Beneficiaries
Sadar	3	277	South Tripura	20	944
Bishalgarh	9	563	Kamalpur	3	301
Sonamura	3	95	Ambasa	4	122
Khowai	5	429	L.T.V	7	397
Teliamura	0	0	Gandacharra	0	0
West Tripura	19	1364	Dhalai	14	820
Udaipur	4	73	Dharmanagar	1	55
Belonia	0	0	Kailasahar	4	258
Santibazar	5	182	Kanchanpur	5	323
Sabroom	4	235	North Tripura	10	636
Amarpur	7	454	TOTAL	63	3764

Source: Tripura Rehabilitation Plantation Corporation

The above Table (4) shows that West Tripura district has the highest number of beneficiaries, followed by South Tripura, Dhalai, and North Tripura. Tripura Rehabilitation Plantation Corporation is the apex agency for raising rubber plantations in Dhalai district and the dominance is exhibited by the fact that 62.76 percent of the plantations have been raised by it (George, 1992).

The Rubber Board has been implementing special programmes for the benefit of tribal people. The most successful of the various schemes has been the economic rehabilitation programmes for tribals implemented jointly with the state governments (George *et. al.*, 1988). In Tripura, a block plantation project is being implemented for tribal shifting cultivators in the land allotted to them, engaging them as wage earners during the immaturity period. The project, with an integrated approach, aims at an overall development (Varkey and Kumar, 2013). The plantations have already entered tapping phase and the Board also is providing support by forming Rubber Processing Centers (RPSs) and assisting them in community processing and marketing with the required infrastructure. Rubber being a long gestation crop, taking about seven years to come to yielding, the tribal families must be supported during the immature phase (Min *et. al.*, 2017).

The project involves taking up of block plantation of rubber in a specific area with about 40-50 ha. The implementation includes simultaneous development of the plantation areas as well as providing various services including village roads, *anganwadi* centers, health sub centers, drinking water facilities, primary schools, power connectivity etc. Community participation is ensured through empowerment groups comprising rubber producer's societies and women thrift groups (Raju, 2016). Plantation is taken up on individual lands that are owned by the beneficiaries who work on their plantations. Each beneficiary is paid wages. Non-tribal workers and non-owners are not allowed as workers. Such a method creates a sense of ownership and attachment to the plantation among the beneficiaries (George *et. al.*, 1988).

CONCLUSION

Rubber plantation needs initial capital investment as establishment and maintenance of rubber plantation during the long gestation period (upto 6th year) is needed. Among various components of labour cost, the prime cost is that of the application of manures and fertilizers which constitutes largest of the total establishment cost, followed by weeding, land preparation, digging and pit filling, cost of insecticide application, cost planting and cost of shading.

Rubber plantation is expanding rapidly in Tripura. Rubber Block Plantation for socio-economic settlement of the 'Jhumias' in Tripura has been considered a great success. A block plantation project is being implemented for tribals engaged in shifting cultivators in the land allotted to them, engaging them as wage earners during the immaturity period. Community participation is ensured through empowerment groups comprising rubber producer's societies and women thrift groups. Department of Rural Development, Department of Tribal Welfare and Tripura Rehabilitation Plantation corporation are actively engaged in raising rubber plantations for the rehabilitation of the landless tribals.

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INFLUENCE OF WORK CULTURE ON EMPLOYEE WORKING STYLE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO IT SECTORS IN CHENNAI CITY

Dr. A. Kamalakannan*

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine how work culture impacts the way employees work, specifically in the IT sector in Chennai. Over the past few decades, there have been significant changes in the way of employees work in the IT industry. The introduction of flexible working hours and remote work options has made it more convenient and comfortable for employees. The economic crisis/pandemic situation had a profound impact on the working styles and work culture of IT employees. The main objective of this study was to investigate the work culture and working styles of IT employees during the financial turmoil. The study utilized a descriptive research design and included a sample of 180 employees in the IT industry. Convenience sampling technique has been used for participant selection. Primary data has been collected through a questionnaire, and a pilot study has been conducted with 30 respondents to ensure the reliability and validity of the research instrument. The target employees for this study were middle managers and below. The researchers employed percentage analysis, chi-square tests, and correlations for data analysis. The key findings revealed that poor job performance has attributed to deviations and distractions from work, as well as a lack of resources and tools leading to communication gaps among employees. The shift to online communication has also affected leadership practices negatively. Therefore, organizations should focus on fostering a friendly leadership style that promotes good working relationships and teamwork among employees. This will ultimately enhance their performance and productivity.

Keywords: Adaptability, Pearson's coefficient, performance, responsibility, skill, work culture, work style.

INTRODUCTION

Work style refers to the manner in which daily tasks are carried out within a company. It determines how well an individual fits into their role and the overall organizational culture. It encompasses various aspects such as work ethic, teamwork, leadership, and task management.

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Understanding one’s work style helps in clarifying responsibilities and enhancing performance. It also aids in identifying areas for improvement and addressing weaknesses. Recognizing individual and teamwork styles promotes better collaboration and overall productivity. Workplace culture involves the expression of opinions by employees within an organization. The ability to adapt to the current environment is crucial. Work style involves personal preferences in organizing and completing tasks. In a single workplace, there are diverse types of workers who achieve success through different workflow styles. Work style emphasizes the importance of effective planning and focused execution.

Kalgi, Hire, and Dhole (2023) argues that organizational culture refers to a collection of shared assumptions within a company. These assumptions include beliefs about what is important, how individuals should conduct themselves, and what is considered normal within the organization. These assumptions are reflected in both formal rules, such as policies and processes, and informal rules, which are commonly understood expectations, standards, and norms that shape workplace behavior and determine what is acceptable or not. Organizational culture can be likened to the personality of a company, influencing the behavior of employees at all levels. It dictates what employees should prioritize, how they should respond emotionally, and the appropriate actions to take in various situations. Culture emerges from the interactions and collaborations of people in their living and working environments.

Raji Mol (2022) argues that an effective work environment can greatly influence employee productivity. Factors such as lighting, noise, temperature, and furniture play a significant role in this. Insufficient lighting and excessive noise can lead to physical and psychological issues for employees, including headaches and stress. Poor air quality can also result in respiratory problems. Inappropriate furniture can cause fatigue and discomfort. These problems can have long-term effects on the organization’s financial well-being. To ensure employee productivity, office managers should create a work culture that prioritizes ergonomics and provides a suitable environment for employees. (Soni, 2015) Positive organizational cultures often provide rewards to their employees. This, in turn, creates an environment that enables employees to grow, develop, and perform at their best. In addition, the organizational culture consists of power culture, role culture, achievement culture, and support culture. Each of these cultures has different effects on employee engagement and effectiveness.

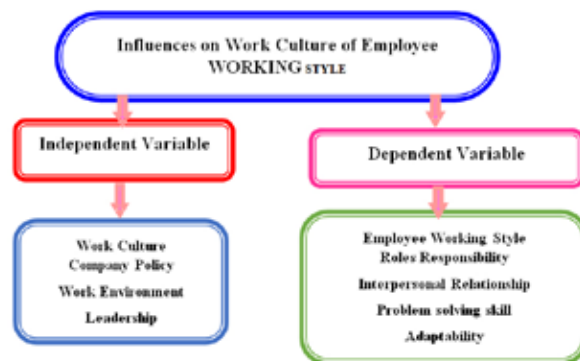


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework - Influences on Work culture and Employee Working Style

Work Culture

The work culture in an organization is formed by the collective mindset of its employees. Despite their diverse backgrounds and opinions, they unite to work towards a shared goal, which give rise to a unique culture within the organization. This culture is shaped by the work environment, policies, and procedures that encourage employee engagement. It is guided by the overall principles and ideas that define how employees work in the organization. The work culture is greatly influenced by factors such as productivity, performance, policies, and the relationships fostered within the organization.

Company policy

The policy means general rules and regulations that employees in an organization must follow. They are important because they show what the management expects and how they want everyone to follow the law. Policies are created to give guidance, ensure legal compliance, and communicate the management's expectations. The policy content should be easy to understand and include the date it becomes effective. It is also important to get input from stakeholders, effectively communicate the policies to employees, and make revisions when necessary.

Work environment

The work environment is crucial for an employee's experience. It greatly influences the work culture and ultimately impacts the organization's success. The work environment consists of various factors such as physical features, employee development programs, job conditions and benefits, and team building activities. These elements collectively determine whether the environment is favourable or unfavourable.

Leadership

The art of motivating individuals to achieve specific goals set by an organization is known as influencing. It requires guiding employees to meet the organization's requirements. Leadership practices encompass convincing employees, managing diverse teams, adapting to change, adhering to norms, and making choices. Different leadership styles include transactional, transformational, democratic, autocratic, bureaucratic, charismatic, and *laissez-faire*. The leader plays a crucial role in shaping the organization's culture as they pave the way for their followers.

Working Style

An employee's working style refers to the approach they take to complete their daily tasks. The effectiveness of their work is influenced by their working style. This includes adjusting to their assigned role within the organization and using their skills to successfully complete their tasks. The most desirable working style for an employee is one that is flexible, involves collaboration with team members, includes effective communication, and ensures a prompt response to assigned work.

Roles and Responsibility

The success of the organization depends on the employee's contribution towards achieving the organization's goals. The employee is responsible for completing their job duties efficiently

within the given period. There are two important roles that the employee needs to fulfil - the technical role, which requires specific skills and knowledge mentioned in the job description, and the social role, which involves interacting with others while performing job tasks. In the social role, the employee should listen, share, and exchange information with colleagues. Responsibility includes having a positive attitude, accepting the outcomes of their work, maintaining high work ethics, ensuring job security, and advancement in their career.

Interpersonal relationship

The bond among individuals in a company is crucial. It helps in advancing one's career, improving physical and emotional health, and achieving success in life. Moreover, it greatly benefits employees by reducing stress and anxiety, fostering creativity, resolving conflicts, promoting healthy relationships, showing appreciation, collaborating, and exchanging knowledge. To maintain a positive interpersonal relationship within the organization, it is important to embrace personal differences, be patient, and handle difficult situations and people. An interpersonal relationship is vital in shaping the working dynamics of an organisation as it is unavoidable.

Problem Solving Skill

An individual's capability to manage problems and difficult situations in a complex work environment is crucial in an organization. The employee should possess the ability to identify the cause of the issue, comprehend it thoroughly, analyze the situation, seek expert advice, determine the most effective solution, and effectively communicate it to others using the most suitable method for successful implementation and result evaluation. This process fosters the growth of analytical, creative, and communication skills, as well as career progression for employees. Adopting problem-solving work practices is highly important in our daily lives.

Adaptability

Learning and acquiring necessary skills is crucial for survival and success in any organization. The ability to adapt and adjust to new situations is key. Employees who possess adaptability skills are not discouraged by change or failures. They are always prepared to upgrade and embrace change. Adaptability enables collaboration, continuous improvement, positivity, resilience in challenging situations, creativity, initiative-taking, openness to new trends, and flexibility. Employees with adaptability skills can effectively handle changes in work patterns within the organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gautam (2020) believes and work principles guiding overall organizational behaviour. Employees' behaviours are the consequences of work-culture as they behave reciprocal of their experience. This study establishes unique relationship among work-culture, employee satisfaction and work-behaviour in Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) in his research examines the relationship between work culture, employee satisfaction, and work behaviour in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Data from 376 respondents was collected through Confirmatory Factor Analysis, regression analysis, and the Preacher and Hayes Process Macro approach. The study found that work culture significantly influences employee satisfaction and

behaviour, with no moderating effect on job satisfaction. The findings suggest that managers should promote a supportive work culture to increase satisfaction and positive work behaviour.

Niculita (2015) in a study involving 58 Romanian public sector employees found that organizational climate significantly impacts work styles. The study used the SM II Questionnaire and ECO System to assess work styles. Findings indicated that positive motivation, interpersonal relationships, efficient management, and organizational support positively influence specific work style factors, although no overall effects were found.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The performance and outcome of the IT sector are greatly influenced by the work culture and working style of employees. Due to the closure of business centres caused by the fiscal issues, management faces the challenge of having employees work from home for an extended period. To understand the impact of work culture on employee working style, a research study has been undertaken. The study aims to explore how the different working styles of employees influence the organization's culture. Since working remotely is a new scenario, it is important to understand the working style of employees, particularly those in the IT sectors of Chennai.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

- ❖ To study the socio demographic information of IT employees in Chennai;
- ❖ To identify the work culture prevailing in IT sector in Chennai;
- ❖ To examine the working style of employees in IT sector in Chennai;
- ❖ To find the association between work culture and working style among the employees.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀: There is no significant difference between gender and work environment

H₀: There is no significant association between work culture and employee's working style.

SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

The study follows a descriptive methodology. The research plan aims to create a conceptual framework and develop a research tool to collect data from primary sources. Secondary sources will be used to identify the components. The instrument's reliability will be checked, and the data will be analyzed and interpreted to draw research findings and conclusions. The study's independent variables include personal profile (gender, age, marital status, education, experience, and income) and work culture (company policy, work environment, and leadership). The dependent variables include working style (roles and responsibility, interpersonal relationship, problem solving skills, and adaptability).

The employees working in the IT sector in Chennai make up the population of this study. The sample size for this study consists of 180 respondents from the IT sector in Chennai. The samples were drawn using a convenience method, which is a non-probability technique. The research tool was developed based on previous literature and identified dimensions. Questions were formulated using Likert's five-point scale. The tool was pilot-tested with 30 respondents and found to be reliable with a score of 0.756 in the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure test

(exploratory factor analysis). The primary data for this study was collected from employees in Chennai using a self-administered questionnaire. Secondary sources of information were gathered from journals and online sources.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The research involved 180 participants after conducting a preliminary study with 30 participants to ensure the study's reliability. The researchers utilized statistical tools such as percentage analysis, as well as testing tools like the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure and Bartlett's Test, along with correlation analysis.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Table 1: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.756
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1827.596
	df	171
	Sig.	.000

Table 1 Shows that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) of Sampling Adequacy test value is 0.756, which is more than 0.5 in this study and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity significant to a level of significant value is <0.001 . This shows that there is a high level of correlation between variables and the factors of work culture on employee's working style are adequate to apply factor analysis.

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix					
Factor	Components	Item Description	Rotated loading	Eigen Value	% of variance
I	Company Policy	Item1	0.814	3.143	16.543
		Item2	0.806		
		Item3	0.777		
		Item4	0.709		
II	Work Environment	Item5	0.881	2.225	11.713
		Item6	0.740		
		Item7	0.593		
		Item8	0.526		
III	Leadership	Item9	0.919	2.186	11.505
		Item10	0.767		

IV	Roles & Responsibility	Item11	0.920	2.144	11.284
		Item12	0.844		
		Item13	0.644		
V	Interpersonal communication	Item14	0.869	1.721	9.056
		Item15	0.867		
VI	Problem solving skills	Item16	0.854	1.544	8.129
		Item17	0.758		
VII	Adaptability	Item18	0.843	1.533	8.069
		Item19	0.787		

Interpretation

Table 2 shows that all items in this present study are load in Rotated Component Matrix and extracted with seven components and highly significant. The eigenvalue of factor 1 is 3.143 with 16.543 % of the variance and the factor related to company policy. The eigenvalue of factor 2 is 2.225 with 11.713 % of the variance and the factor related to the work environment. The eigenvalue of factor 3 is 2.186 with 11.505 % of the variance and the factor related to leadership. The eigenvalue of factor 4 is 2.144 with 11.284 % of the variance and the factor is related to roles & responsibilities. The eigenvalue of factor 5 is 1.721 with 9.056 % of the variance and the factor related to interpersonal communication. The eigenvalue of factor 6 is 1.544 with 8.129% of the variance and the factor related to problem-solving skills. The eigenvalue of factor 7 is 1.533 with 8.069% of the variance and the factor related to adaptability. Therefore, it may be concluded that there is a high level of correlation between variables, which makes it adequate to apply factor analysis.

Table 3: Demographic Profile of Respondents

S.No.	Attributes	Categories	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	133	74
		Female	47	26
		Total	180	100
2	Age	Below 30	89	49
		Above 30	91	51
		Total	180	100
3	Marital status	Married	73	41
		Unmarried	107	59
		Total	180	100

4	Education	UG	141	78
		PG	39	22
		Total	180	100
5	Experience	Below 5 years	69	38
		Above 5 years	111	62
		Total	180	100
6	Income (Monthly)	Below 50,000	128	71
		Above 50,000	52	29
		Total	180	100

Table 4: Chi-Square test Analysis of Gender and Work Environment

Work Environment	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Highly Dissatisfaction	12	2	14
Dissatisfaction	18	3	21
Neutral	72	15	87
Satisfaction	17	23	40
Highly Satisfaction	14	4	18
Total	133	47	180
Pearson Chi-Square Value	30.142		
D.F	6		
P value	<0.001		
Hypothesis	Rejected		
Contingence Coefficient	0.362		
Level of relationship between variables	Moderate		

Interpretation

Table 4 reveals that, Pearson Chi-Square Value of the above Table is 30.142 at a 5% level of significance. P-value is less than 0.001. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that the work culture variable on work environment moderately depend on the gender of the respondents in the IT Sector. Therefore, work culture only moderately depends gender-wise, because male and female have different opinion in their present work environment and with facilities provided by the IT Sector.

Table 5: Correlations Analysis for Association between Work Culture on Employee's Working Style

Correlations Analysis between Work Culture on Employee's Working Style				
Employee Working Style	Source	Company Policy	Work Environment	Leadership
Role & Responsibility	Pearson Correlation	0.789**	0.856**	0.795**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	180	180	180
Interpersonal communication	Pearson Correlation	0.897**	0.910**	0.826**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	180	180	180
Problem Solving Skills	Pearson Correlation	0.662**	0.619**	0.704**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	180	180	180
Adaptability	Pearson Correlation	0.709**	0.621**	0.801**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	180	180	180

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In Table 5, Karl Pearson's coefficient of a correlation reveals that the work culture factor of company policy is positively correlated with the employee's working style namely roles & responsibility (r-value is 0.789, the p-value is <0.001), interpersonal communication (r-value is 0.897, the p-value is <0.001), problem-solving skills (r-value is 0.662, p-value is <0.001) and adaptability (r-value is 0.709, p-value is <0.001). These values are statistically significant at a 1% level of significance in this study. Therefore, it concluded that the company work culture variable on company policy positively influences the employee working style variables namely role & responsibility, interpersonal communication, problem-solving skills, and adaptability.

In Table 5, Karl Pearson's coefficient of a correlation further reveal that the work culture factor of work environment is positively correlated with employee's working style namely roles & responsibility (r-value is 0.856, the p-value is <0.001), interpersonal communication (r-value is 0.910, the p-value is <0.001), problem-solving skills (r-value is 0.619, the p value is <0.001) and adaptability (r-value is 0.621, the p-value is <0.001). These values are statistically significant at a 1% level of significance in this study. Therefore, it concludes that the company's work culture variable on the work environment positively influences the employee's working style variables namely, role & responsibility, interpersonal communication, problem-solving skills, and adaptability. In addition that, Karl Pearson's coefficient of the correlation Table reveals that the work culture factor of leadership is positively correlated with employee's working style namely, roles & responsibility (r-value is 0.795, the p-value is <0.001), interpersonal communication (r-value is 0.826, p-value is <0.001), problem-solving skills (r-value is 0.704,

the p-value is <0.001) and adaptability (r-value is 0.801, p-value is <0.001). These values are statistically significant at a 1% level of significance in this study. Therefore, it concludes that the company's work culture variable on leadership positively influences the employee's working style variables namely, role & responsibility, interpersonal communication, problem-solving skills, and adaptability.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Finding related to Objective one

- 73.89% of the respondents are male and 26.11 of the respondents are female.
- 49.44% of the respondents fall below 30 years of age and 50.56% of the respondents fall above 30 years of age.
- 40.56% of the respondents are married and 59.44% of respondents are unmarried.
- 78.33% of the respondents are undergraduate and 21.67% are post-graduate.
- 43.99% of the respondents have less than 5 years of work experience and 61.67 % of the respondents have more than 5 years of work experience
- 71.11% of the respondents' monthly income is below 50,000 and 28.89% of the respondents' monthly income is above 50,000.

Finding related to Objective Two

- The work culture variable on work environment moderately influenced the gender of IT sector employees in Chennai city. Therefore, it is concluded that male and female employees are dependent upon the work environment of an organization, while their working styles differed, and it determines their individual performance.

Finding related to Objective Three

- The employee's working style variable on role and responsibility moderately influence the gender of IT sector employees in Chennai city. Therefore, it is concluded that male and female employees are dependent upon the role and responsibilities of an organization while their working style differed, and it determines their individual performance in their workplace.

Finding related to Objective Four

- Company's work culture variable on company policy positively influences the employee's working style variables namely, role & responsibility, interpersonal communication, problem-solving skills, and adaptability.
- Company work culture variable on work environment positively influences the employee's working style variables namely, role & responsibility, interpersonal communication, problem-solving skills, and adaptability.
- Work culture variable on leadership positively influences the employee's working style variables namely, role & responsibility, interpersonal communication, problem-solving skills, and adaptability.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

- It is suggested to the management to change the remote working style to place- of -work working as it creates enthusiasm and positive mindset to work in the office.
- To conduct games and informal meetings to build the communication gap among employees.
- The company should provide convenient working time to increase individual employee's working styles.
- To create a friendly leadership style that helps to build good work relations among the co-workers.

CONCLUSION

The IT sector's work culture in Chennai shows that the companies have flexible policies, which benefit employees' well-being. However, due to some economic crises/pandemic situation, employees are now working in conditions that hinder their performance. This is because of distractions, lack of proper resources and tools, and communication gaps among employees. The leadership practices have also been affected negatively, as there is a lack of interaction and communication in online mode. Therefore, the organization should establish a friendly leadership style to foster good work relationships and teamwork. This will ensure that individual employee effectively fulfils their roles and responsibilities, ultimately improving their current work style as well as performance.

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

India has a huge advantage over other countries in terms of becoming a global leader because we effectively tap into the youth's potential. Quality education is the only way to achieve this. With artificial intelligence's potential growth in India, now is the ideal time to incorporate AI in education to reap its benefits and prepare India's young for the future. Artificial intelligence has great potential in India. India's AI technology has the potential to make it a world leader in artificial intelligence. In India, AI technology is being used effectively in nearly every area, including agriculture, healthcare, education, infrastructure, transportation, retail, manufacturing, and so on. By 2035AD, artificial intelligence has the potential to add US\$1 trillion to the Indian economy. With the influence of AI in education in India growing by the day, the education sector must adapt its plans to account for the impact of AI in education in India and how it can assist today's young minds to become tomorrow's capable leaders and innovators. AI in education in India will also play a key part in attaining the country's 2030 objectives, which are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals that includes the goal of expanding the number of competent instructors significantly.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, content creation, efficiency, promising applications.

INTRODUCTION

While the idea of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not new, its emerging avatar, based on the three underlying phenomena of big data, machine learning and exponential increase in computing power has enabled AI to become a reality. Algorithms created through machine learning are on verge of passing the Turing tests, of exhibiting intelligent behavior indistinguishable from that of a human, covering high-level cognitive processes like thinking, perceiving, learning, problem solving / decision-making etc. The history of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be traced from 1950 when Allen Turing, recognised as the father of AI, developed a 'Turing Machine' which was enabled like a computer programme that shows human like intelligence. But, the term AI was coined by John McCarthy in 1956 who defined AI as "the science and engineering

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of making intelligent machine.”

Further, he defined it in following words, “*the study (of artificial intelligence) is to proceed on the basis of the conjecture that every aspect of learning or any other feature of intelligence can be in principle be so precisely described that a machine can be made to simulate it*” (in Russel & Norvig, 2010). Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a machine which is considered to have the ability to perform assignments and resolve certain issues and problems as a human being does. It may also be explicated as a system of computer programme which can do tasks which generally require human intelligence like resolving complicated problems, making choices and decisions, objects deduction, images and face recognition and so on. (Zulekha, 2019). In general, it is an electro-mechanical process of a machine that thinks, understands the languages, solves the problems, perceives and anticipates the environment, adapts the situations, anticipates the actions and so on.

The starting point for AI in its current avatar is the availability of large volumes of data, the code of which is written by humans, and is further generated by machines which mine and analyze the data to derive patterns which can be refined by running these through even more data. In education, such big data would comprise educational content developed by teachers, educators, education systems and experts, banks of teaching approaches / methodologies, assessment banks. These data are relatively static. Dynamic big data includes information on transactions (lessons and activities) and student responses to activities and assessments. This big data can be used to develop algorithms that can support:

(i) Self-learning through adaptive practice;

(ii) Teaching through personalized education where custom content, pedagogy and assessment can be derived for each student based on her/his responses to past activities and assessments.

(iii) Macro diagnostics and predictive models, across groups of learners (by geography, demographic profile, grade, medium of instruction, subject and other categories).

The aim of an entity designing an AI application in education would include the task of capturing large volumes of curricular resources, with metadata relating to the subject area, relevant grades, language, type of resource, format of file, level of resource, role (introducing a topic, reinforcing learning) in teaching etc. NCERT for instance has listed a set of 31 such metadata elements to be tagged to each resource available in its NROER (National Repository of Open Educational Resources) repository. Another task would be to capture actual use of these resources in different learning situations, the activities of the teacher (pedagogies) and the responses of the learners to the content, usually through assessment process that seeks to ascertain the level of learning/understanding of the student before and after the transaction with a resource.

Analyzing whether the learner has learnt / understood the concept, the feedback for that particular resource unit and the transaction approach would be recorded. Recording thousands, millions of such responses to different resource units (along with the profile of the teacher and the learner) for a concept and combinations of these resource units with different transaction

methods, with the feedback (on its effectiveness in ensuring learning) would help the algorithm identify the effective learning resources and methods in a learner context. Identifying the few correct content along with transaction approaches would improve teaching efficiencies as well as effectiveness, is the assumption. The same can also support self-learning. A student can use resources provided by the AI engine and respond to the assessment activities, providing feedback on the learning from the content and activities provided. Based on the analyses of the feedback, the AI engine would suggest, further content and activities to the learner.

AI in education in India

While AI in education is still in nascent stages, it is more advanced in the field of health, which can be compared with education in its essential nature and purpose, as far as the development of AI solutions is concerned. Health aims to identify issues/problems with the human body and based on past data collected of similar problems as well as solutions provided (and responses to these solution), keep refining its repository of solutions for each of these problems (with as much data, metadata about each problem). Over time, as more and more data are collected, the number of variations in health problems and possible contextual remedies will be captured and the AI will be able to provide a most relevant solution for a given problem. For instance, Sloan Kettering Memorial Hospital is attempting to build such AI using its hospital data with the Watson Oncology Advisor. Similarly, in education, the problem of curing ignorance (promoting learning), content and pedagogies to address this ignorance and assessment data providing evidence of success/effectiveness of these content/pedagogies can be collected.

Over time as more data is available on the different challenges (learning requirements, misconceptions), and solutions (custom content and pedagogies), the AI will be able to suggest the appropriate content/pedagogy for any learning requirement, assessing the learner context, profile and aptitudes. In the USA, the approaches outlined above are already being used by AI applications such as Watson Teacher Advisor (from IBM) and G-suite for Education (from Google). The widespread use of personal digital devices by students provides vendors like Google to collect large volumes of data. While full-fledged personal analytics and personalized learning is still some time away, the approach of the current AI models gives us a basis to imagine a future where the AI algorithms would understand the learning levels, misconceptions, learning styles, interest areas, needs/priorities of each student and based on these provide custom content, pedagogies and assessments for each learner. In India, since digital education in schools is still long way off from being universalised, due to lack of sufficient basic infrastructure, maintenance, electricity issues, data collection is still in its nascent stages. A company that has developed a product called *Mindspark* claims to have data from assessments which run into millions of tests for lakhs of students.

If a student is able to complete a two-digit addition sum (without carry over), he can move to the next step of addition with carryover. If the student gets the two-digit addition wrong, then more two-digit sums and /or single digit addition sums can be provided to assess if student has understood the concept of addition. Text problems more connected to the life of the student can be provided instead of plain numeric sums. This is provided as an example to help understand the working of the AI engine. Thus, AI can help in identifying relevant learning

methodologies for diverse contexts through use of big data, thereby enabling improved quality of education. Government of India collects micro-level data on students every year which is available on the UDISE (Universal District Information for School Education). However, the government has not yet developed any AI infrastructure for analyzing this huge data. This information is collected only once a year and is therefore static but could be analyzed to derive directions for provision of school infrastructure, teachers as well as possibly, predictions of potential drop-outs based on demographic profile (socio-economic factors) information.

AI in Education: Challenges

There are several challenges to the use of AI in education. Some are common to the use of AI across sectors. The first one is that the algorithms constituting the AI are not neutral or objective (assuming there could be such a thing). Biases of the programmers get into the code and get amplified in the machine generated code. This sometimes becomes clearly evident in the outcomes, such as the cases of criminal profiling algorithms being more (and unfairly) severe on African-Americans in the USA, as also areas such as credit scoring, insurance premium determination etc. In the Indian education scenario, this risk is very severe. The predominant folk-pedagogies in India privilege education in English medium, over the local/regional language, focus on cracking the examinations than in understanding concepts/making meaning. This is an important cause for rote memorization as the predominant mode of learning. AI is also likely to promote such beliefs and further impoverish learning possibilities of students, especially those belonging to marginalized sections. Secondly, the current syllabi, in many cases reflects the urban, upper caste, upper class, Hindu and male bias of the syllabi developers. For instance, though agriculture is the livelihood of a majority of the population of India, agricultural practices and ideas have very little place in the textbook. Derivations of such content would also reflect these biases.

The teacher-population profile also reflects this bias, with teachers in government and aided schools, increasingly belonging to a class and caste different from their students. On the societal side, India is a rigid society, with widespread problems such as marginalization on grounds of caste, gender, religion and class. The caste system in a sense already uses some kind of intelligence to predict that the best chances for the son of a potter would be to become a potter and of a trader, to become a trader. Secondly the people who would work in the AI algorithms design would consist of more tech-biased people, technologists or tech-enamoured educators, who are less likely to be aware of the complexities of education.

Purpose of Education

The primary aim of education is to produce / strengthen a sense of agency in the learner. Hence, life choices based on capacities and aptitudes may be inappropriate for a learner and may end up strengthening legacy evils such as caste system. Thus, existing biases and harmful approaches will get amplified through AI rote/ drill learning, inappropriate curricular materials, privileging tendencies over inclinations/interests. At a macro-level, the purpose of education is to support the learner to become a 'responsible citizen'.

This may require the educational processes to question dominant perspectives and beliefs. '*Going against the grain*' may often be essential for progress/breakthrough in society, no

society can move forward by looking at rearview mirror. Algorithms can carry the biases of the people developing them. Another challenge is transparency of algorithm. To reduce if not avoid problems of bias, it will be required to subject the algorithms to audit. For this the algorithms should be released as open source for others to review and comment. Google for instance has a project that releases AI algorithms as open source. However, release of algorithms as open source can also increase chances of misuse of such algorithms. Another option would be for specialized agencies auditing the code, on behalf of regulators. The dominant model of implementing digital technologies has been through proprietary models.

These models distort competition possibilities and provide for huge rent seeking possibilities. Thus Microsoft has been the leader in the office automation space, which enabled super normal profits for the company. This has been amplified in the AI space, with most AI development with very few corporations, all American companies like Google, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft etc. Traditional arguments for benefits of free markets have emphasized the role of competition in ensuring benefits for consumers.

There is also Network effect, the phenomena by which the more users per product, the more users product will attract. However, due to the network effects the opposite phenomena of monopolies of oligopolies in the digital space has been seen. Google holds a large part of the search share while Facebook is a near monopoly in the social media space. Since Facebook is the most popular social media platform, it is the platform that new users will join. This is because users of competing products cannot connect to users of Facebook due to lack of inter-operability. This is also a reason why Microsoft office dominated the world of office automation with its proprietary software producing outputs with proprietary formats that were not easy to read and edit in other office products, locking in 8-users into its software. Indeed, today's market place is so distorted that new entrants try to buy up the market with huge price discounts, freebies, burning up venture capital. The venture capitalists fund a company which is making huge losses in its business only because of the expectation of super-exorbitant profits, once the company kills competition with predatory pricing and becomes a (near) monopoly. Even in the area of AI, the company that manages to collect and control large volumes of data will be in a position to command the market.

Mitigation of Challenges

To save us from a Kafkaesque future, we must democratize AI. The first issue is the ownership of data collected about teachers and students. Currently in the absence of any frameworks, such data may be under the possession and de-facto ownership of the IT company providing the solution. For instance, users of google suite for education in Vishakapatnam corporation schools, would be providing data about themselves as well as their transaction and assessment information would be collected by Google. Availability of this data for the school itself, the teachers and students (both micro individual data, as well as data aggregated for the school) is unknown, as well as to other organizations interested in analyzing the data to refine their AI engines. Frameworks to ensure an ethical AI are essential, and these should stipulate data ownership to lie with the school and not allow for monopoly control of data by the company providing services to the school.

Second issue is the transparency of the code that analyses the data. The code will hide the biases of the coders and hence it is essential that it should be visible to audit. The Google search engine is designed to throw advertisements and page rank can be influenced by its commercial interests. The code may consciously or unconsciously reflect the commercial interests of the company and the only way to avoid this problem is to make the code subject to audit. This was evident in Volkswagen car diesel exhaust case. Either the code should be released as open source under copy left licensing (such as GPL) or be provided to specialised agencies for audit (both white and black box). Only audited versions should be provided for production cases. Beta code not subject to audit should not be provided to schools.

The usage of technology in education has revolutionized education systems with better reach and improved execution. The Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) defined educational technology as “the study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using and managing appropriate technological processes and resources”. It denotes instructional technology as “the theory and practice of design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of processes and resources for learning.” The pandemic imposed online delivery of classes and technology has played a critical role in that. The current situation seems that the best way for education, for now, is online, and hence it is vital to fine-tune online education further.

AI will be an enabler in improving online education. It can catalyze the online education market in India, which is poised to reach USD 1.96 billion in 2021. The role of teachers in education systems is irreplaceable; however, AI will aid and improve a teacher’s job. AI is expected to fill the gaps in learning and teaching methodology and delivery. With the help of AI, students can get personalized curriculum, tests, learning methods and delivery. This otherwise had been a challenge for teachers as managing and providing teaching that suits every student’s specific needs was nearly impossible. According to *Business Today*, by 2024, 47% of learning management tools will be AI-enabled. Also, AI in the education industry is expected to reach a CAGR of 40.3% between 2019-25.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing various industries, and the education sector is no exception. AI technologies have the potential to transform traditional teaching methods, personalize learning experiences, and improve overall educational outcomes. AI is making its mark in the school education sector and the benefits it brings to students, teachers, and educational institutions.

1. Personalized Learning

One of the key advantages of AI in education is its ability to personalize learning experiences. AI algorithms can analyze student data, including their strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and preferences, to develop tailored learning paths. Adaptive learning platforms powered by AI can provide individualized instruction, presenting content at the appropriate pace and level of difficulty for each student. This personalized approach helps students grasp concepts more effectively, stay engaged, and achieve better learning outcomes.

2. Intelligent Tutoring Systems

AI-powered intelligent tutoring systems act as virtual tutors, offering personalized guidance and feedback to students. These systems use natural language processing and machine learning to interact with students, answer their questions, and provide step-by-step explanations. Intelligent tutoring systems can identify areas where students are struggling and offer targeted interventions, helping them overcome challenges and improve their understanding of complex topics.

3. Enhanced Administrative Efficiency

AI can streamline administrative tasks in educational institutions, freeing up valuable time for teachers and administrators. AI-powered systems can automate administrative processes such as grading, attendance tracking, and scheduling. This automation reduces the administrative burden, allowing teachers to focus more on instruction and student support. Additionally, AI can assist in data analysis, helping schools gain insights into student performance, identify trends, and make data-driven decisions to improve overall educational quality.

4. Intelligent Content Creation and Recommendation

AI technologies can assist in content creation and recommendation, providing educators with valuable resources and materials. AI algorithms can analyze vast amounts of educational content and curate relevant resources based on specific topics, learning objectives, or student needs. This helps teachers access high-quality materials, saving them time and effort in lesson planning. AI can also assist in generating educational content, such as automated assessment items or interactive learning modules, offering educators additional resources to engage students effectively.

5. Early Intervention and Student Support

AI tools can identify early signs of academic challenges or potential learning difficulties. By analyzing student performance data, AI algorithms can flag at-risk students who may require additional support. This early intervention enables teachers and support staff to provide timely assistance, addressing learning gaps and ensuring students receive the support they need to succeed.

AI in education can assist our teachers in increasing their efficiency by using AI applications such as real-time text to speech and text translation systems, automating mundane and repetitive tasks such as taking attendance, automating grading, personalizing the learning journey based on experience, skill, and understanding, and so on. Artificial intelligence has a huge potential in India, and to fully use it, AI education in India has to be executed on a national basis. PictoBlox AI, India's first interactive AI education platform, has been developed to provide a fulfilling project-based learning experience through its artificial intelligence and machine learning tools integrated into a graphical programming interface, to implement AI education in India and prepare the youth for an AI future. It includes learning materials such as tutorials, guided projects, and a tutor-led online AI course, all designed with generation in mind.

CONCLUSION

India has long advocated for universal education. India now has a population of about 600 million young people. They all deserve a good education, skills, and employment. At the same time, AI education may become more accessible and inclusive. Around the world, many tutoring services and learning applications with skill-based curricula are being created. These AI-enabled technologies will allow students to access worldwide classrooms from the comfort of one's own home. It will not only empower students but will also assist teachers in keeping up with current trends. Such solutions might be extremely beneficial to rural schooling. Students in the most distant corners of India would be able to learn in the same way that students in metropolitan areas do. To make India a US\$5 trillion economy, one must tap into the creative potential to develop an innovation-led growth model that will aid in the transformation of our country into a new India. Artificial intelligence will play a critical role in assisting us in achieving this goal. AI's influence on India is larger than one can see or fathom, and it will only grow with time, requiring the youth to be prepared. AI education is critical to making Indians AI-ready and ensuring India's position as a global AI leader.

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Submission of Typscripts

Contributors are requested to follow the Guidelines given below:-

The paper should be composed using MS Word 6.0 and above. An Abstract of about 100 words should be included to describe the main argument and the conclusions of the paper. The Abstract cannot contain endnote references.

The first sheet should carry details of the author's biodata (a brief resume of about 50 words), institutional affiliation, and the mailing address.

A signed declaration of originality and conformance to research ethics by the scholar should accompany the paper; also, that the paper has not been sent to any other journal for publication. The ongoing PhD scholar must submit a signed declaration from research guide also, on the abovementioned aspect.

All diagrams, charts and graphs should be referred to as Figures and consecutively numbered (Fig.1, Fig.2, and so on). Tables should carry only essential data and should complement the text. They should carry the source at the bottom. Each table must be referenced in the text.

If actual statements or phrases are taken from another paper, the name of the author should be mentioned in the text and the chosen material should be placed within quotation marks with an appropriate reference. Author's acknowledgement(s) may be included at the end of the paper and before References/Endnotes begin.

Write dates by beginning with the date, followed by the month and the year (e.g.: 2 October, 1869).

In the text, write numbers in words till the number nine and then in numerals (e.g.: two, four, nine; then 10, 11, 12 and so on).

Names of books, journals, newspapers and foreign terms in the body of the text should appear in italics.

References/Endnotes should be sequentially numbered.

The authors are responsible for accuracy of the references.

While referring to book, follow the example below:-

Byrne, James (1885). *General Principles of the Structure of Language* (2 volumes). London: Trübner and Company.

While referring to article, follow the example below:-

Driem, George van (2013). East Asian Ethnolinguistic Phylogeography, *Bulletin of Chinese Linguistics*, 7(1):1-55.

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